

On the Road to the Promise Land: A Comparative study of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Black Activism  
to the Black Lives Matter Movement

A Thesis submitted to the Graduate School

Valdosta State University

In partial fulfillment of requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

In History

In the Department of History

Of the College of Humanities

& Social Sciences

June 2022

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BA, Valdosta State University, 2016

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## Abstract

The most recent development of the civil rights struggle is development of the grassroots organization Black Lives Matter. This movement and organization highlights ending the ongoing oppression of African Americans in the twenty-first century. This work will partly discuss the history of the Black Lives Matter movement and the incidents that occurred in the past to the present day and compare the strategies and tactics used by the modern activists to the strategies and tactics of past Black activist movements, particularly the abolitionist movement, early 20<sup>th</sup> century advocacy, the Civil Rights movement and the Black Power movement. The overall strategies and tactics of Black Lives Matter Activists are comparable to the Black Power movement, the civil rights movement, early twentieth-century advocacy, and the abolition movement. The abolitionist movement laid the groundwork for every other movement after, including the Black Lives Matter movement. Black Lives Matter activists use some of the same strategies and tactics of the past. The use of the media to portray a message is present in all movements although differently in each one. The evolution of black nationalism is also present in each movement. Each movement through the centuries used some method of indirect and direct action to upset the current situation in favor of African and African Americans. Activists worked to sway the nation through peaceful means such as legislature, political tactics or marches, or they took a direct approach with boycotts, stand – ins or outright rebellions for the rights of African Americans. The tactics and strategies of each movement marginally each group of activists pushed to end the oppression of African Americans.

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## Acknowledgments

Thank you to Dr. Aiello, Dr. Lovern, Dr. Byrd, Dr. Haggard, and the entire History Department at Valdosta State University for supporting me and advising me when I felt truly lost. Your words and encouragement kept me going in not only school but in life. No matter where life takes me you all will hold a special place in my heart. Next, I want to thank my family and friends. You all have been on this journey with me outside of academia. You listened to me over texts, emails, phone calls and visits for too many hours. I owe so much to you all. Thank you all for your love and support. I could not have done it without you all.

## Dedication

For my family, especially Stephanie, Angelo, and Dillion. This journey would not have been completed without you all.

## **Introduction**

The social movement for African and African Americans in the United States began over 400 years ago. Social movements exist when a group inside a community looks to change something about that community. Theodore Abel states, "...the intention that underlies the attempted change arises from the experience of the inadequacy of a given procedure and the belief in the adequacy of the proposed change."<sup>1</sup> The most recent outgrowth of this fight is the Black Lives Matter movement. This movement emphasizes ending the ongoing mistreatment of African Americans in the twenty-first century. This work will partially discuss the history of the Black Lives Matter movement and the events that transpired in the past to the present day. Overall, the strategies and tactics of Black Lives Matter Activists are comparable to the Black Power movement, the civil rights movement, early twentieth-century advocacy, and the abolition movement. Each chapter will examine each movement in comparison to modern protest outgrowths, arguing that Black Lives Matter is theoretically consistent with every other civil rights movement in American history.

The birth of the Black Lives Matter movement began in the early 2010s in response to the acquittal of George Zimmerman. In February 2012, George Zimmerman, a neighborhood watch member, called the police on a suspicious person. Zimmerman proceeded to follow the suspicious figure while on the phone with the police stating "that this guy looks like he is up to no good or he is on drugs or something"<sup>2</sup> The police asked Zimmerman if he was following the

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<sup>1</sup> Theodore Abel, "The Pattern of a Successful Political Movement," *American Sociological Review* 2, no. 3 (1937), 348.

<sup>2</sup> "Transcript of George Zimmerman's Call to the Police," Genuis.

person and told him, "we do not need you to do that."<sup>3</sup> Zimmerman ignored police and proceeded to follow seventeen-year-old Trayvon Martin. As a few moments pass, neighbors report to the police of hearing gunshots. Zimmerman shot Martin, claiming self-defense. Zimmerman was charged with second-degree murder and arrested forty-four days later, only after heightened media attention nationwide, President Obama's public response<sup>4</sup>, and a petition with over a million signatures<sup>5</sup>. After a long year, Zimmerman was found not guilty of all charges by a jury of his peers, including five white women. This instance bears a striking similarity to the assault of Emmet Till decades earlier. In both cases, the victims were Black youths in an unfamiliar neighborhood. In both cases, the offenders were acquitted. In both cases, the Black community was outraged at the exoneration of the offenders, sparking a social movement.

After the acquittal of Zimmerman, three Black women, Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi, created a space at the center of Black politics. Garza posted what she called a love letter to Black people. At the end of this poem were the words Black Lives Matter. Her friend, Cullors, created a hashtag out of the final three words, and Tometi created a social media basis where activists could connect.<sup>6</sup> In 2013, Twitter saw the first use of Black Lives Matter. The following year in 2014, another tragedy struck.

In the summer of 2014, police arrested Eric Garner in Staten Island, New York, for suspicion of illegally selling cigarettes. Garner was put into a chokehold in an altercation with an officer and died. The officer was fired five years later, but the court still refuses to press charges. Garner's last words, "I Can't Breathe," served as a rallying cry. Two months later, in August

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Barack Obama, "Remarks by the President on Trayvon Martin."

<sup>5</sup> Tracey Martin and Sybrina Fulton. "Prosecute the killer of our son, 17-year-old Trayvon Martin."

<sup>6</sup> Jelani Cobb, "The Matters of Black Lives."

2014, in Ferguson, Missouri, an unarmed teenager named Michael Brown Jr was fatally shot by law enforcement Darian Wilson. Brown allegedly stole a pack of cigarillos from the local store. "A year later, we set out together on the Black Lives Matter Freedom Ride to Ferguson, searching for justice for Mike Brown and all of those who have been torn apart by state-sanctioned violence and anti-Black racism."<sup>7</sup> After the death of Michael Brown, protests began to occur all across the nation. In Missouri, the governor called in the National Guard, and law enforcement used tear gas as well as rubber bullets to suppress the protests. At this point, the use of the Black Lives Matter hashtag had increased. "The #BlackLivesMatter hashtag appeared an average of 58,747 times per day in the roughly three weeks following Brown's death."<sup>8</sup> Since Brown's death, a cycle of police killing Black people, protests, and few criminal charges under the Obama and Trump administration.

Obama attempted to establish steps to deescalate the killings of Black and brown people at the hands of police by creating a task force on 21<sup>st</sup>-century policing. Their objective was to investigate how local law enforcement could better police the community. The task force came up with a final report highlighting key focus points for better policing.<sup>9</sup> Under their final reports, Obama issued consent decrees, an agreement the local police department has with the court to correct long-standing unconstitutional behavior of the police.<sup>10</sup> Obama also banned military-grade weapons for police.<sup>11</sup> While this helped reduce counter-protest violence, the Black Lives Matter movement still faced backlash for their protests. This included counter-protests imitating Black Lives Matter using #AllLivesMatter, #BlueLivesMatter, or #WhiteLivesMatter. People

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<sup>7</sup> "What We Believe." Black Lives Matter, 29 July 2020.

<sup>8</sup> Monica Anderson, "The hashtag #BlackLivesMatter emerges: Social activism on Twitter."

<sup>9</sup> Office of Community Oriented Policing Service, "The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing," 1-4.

<sup>10</sup> Miriam Valverde, "Fact-check: Did Obama and Biden 'never even' try to do police reform?"

<sup>11</sup> Lauren Gambino, "Obama to ban police military gear that can 'alienate and intimidate'."

like Rudy Giuliani, Mayor of New York, use these imitations to respond to the movement, claiming that Black Lives Matter is inherently racist.<sup>12</sup> After the election of Trump into the presidency, racial tensions escalated in America again as white nationalists began to counter-protest.

In June 2015, a mass shooting in South Carolina occurred when Dylan Roof, a twenty-one-year-old man, attacked Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church, killing nine people. His reasoning was racially motivated, as seen in his journals.<sup>13</sup> He stated, "I would like to make it crystal clear in his jailhouse journal. I do not regret what I did. I am not sorry. I have not shed a tear for the innocent people I killed."<sup>14</sup> In August 2017, violence broke out as alternative Right protestors and counter-protestors clashed in Emancipation Park in Charlottesville. Violence between the two groups had been reported several times throughout the day. According to the New York times, at 1:40 pm, a car sped into hundreds of people protesting.<sup>15</sup> After these events, Trump did not call for immediate action against white supremacists. In 2018 the number of violent hate crimes escalated as the Trump administration pushed anti-immigration and anti-LGBTQ2+ laws<sup>16</sup> A 2018 FBI report stated, "The majority of the reported hate crimes were motivated by race, ethnicity, or ancestry bias (59.6 percent). Additional biases included religion (18.7 percent), sexual orientation (16.7 percent), gender identity (2.2 percent), disability (2.1 percent), and gender (0.7 percent)."<sup>17</sup> Then in 2020, a video went viral of an unarmed African American man, Ahmaud Aubrey, who had been killed while out for a jog in his neighborhood.

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<sup>12</sup> Naoimi Lim, Rudy Giuliani: "Black Lives Matter 'inherently racist'."

<sup>13</sup> Dylan Roof's Journal. The Post and Courier.

<sup>14</sup> Jennifer H. Hawes, Dylan Roof's Jailhouse Journal, 19.

<sup>15</sup> Ben Decker and Barbara Marcoloni, "How Violence Unfolded in Charlottesville," *New York Times*, 14 August 2017.

<sup>16</sup> Sam Levin, "Violent hate crimes in US reach highest levels in 16 years, FBI reports."

<sup>17</sup> 2018 Hate Crime Statistics released, FBI, 12 November 2019.

The men who killed Aubrey were arrested and faced murder charges. Approximately two weeks later, Breonna Taylor, a resident of Kentucky, was shot and killed by local law enforcement in her apartment. Taylor's death went mostly unnoticed in the beginning due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Covid-19 drastically affected the African American community. According to the CDC, the factors that increase the risk of people of color contracting COVID-19 are discrimination, healthcare access and utilization, occupation, educational, income and wealth gaps, and lastly, housing.<sup>18</sup> One of the people affected by it was George Floyd. Floyd lost his job and tested positive for the virus, which gave him financial issues. He was suspected of using fake money during a purchase, and shortly after, the police arrived. Upon his arrest, police officer Derrick Chauvin put his knee on the back of Floyd's neck for nine minutes. Floyd lay face down in the concrete with the world watching via video. Chauvin's actions again escalated the animosity of the Black community and galvanized them to protest. COVID-19 also helped turn out to protest as many were not allowed to work. The officers involved in Floyd's murder were arrested for the video and protesters' actions nationwide and internationally. Philonise Floyd, Georges Floyd's brother, stated, "people of all backgrounds, genders, and races have come together to demand change, honor them honor George, and make the necessary changes that make law enforcement the solution and not the problem."<sup>19</sup> Campaigners now argue for the policies enacted during the Obama administration to be reinstated as they were overturned during the Trump administration.<sup>20</sup> The Black Lives Matter group demands that police are defunded, and the money placed elsewhere to help the community. Kailee Scales, Black Lives Matter Managing

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<sup>18</sup> "Health Equity Considerations & Racial & Ethnic Minority Groups," Centers for Disease Control, 24 July 2020.

<sup>19</sup> Philonise Floyd, "House Judiciary Committee Hearing on Police Reform" *C-Span*, 10 June 2020, 31:15.

<sup>20</sup> Pilkington, Ed. Trump's Scrapping of Obama-era reforms hinders police reform. *The Guardian*. 7 June 2020.

Director, stated, "in some cities, just by defunding the police by five percent would double the budget for public health."<sup>21</sup>

Since these events of 2014, the Black Lives Matter Movement has grown with over thirty chapters worldwide. The Black Lives Matter movement continues to fight against anti-Black racism, "... for freedom and justice for Black people and, by extension, all people,"<sup>22</sup> and provide a space for all Black people. This movement has its roots in the civil rights movements that came before it. The Black Lives Matter movement draws from the struggles of earlier movements. It uses the lessons to improve the fight for equality for Black people and, by extension, all people in America.

The strategies and tactics of the Black Lives Matter movement fall in line with other Black civil rights movements. The overarching strategy of Black Lives Matter "...is to eradicate white supremacy and build local power to intervene in violence inflicted on Black communities by the state and vigilantes. By combating and countering acts of violence, creating space for Black imagination and innovation...",<sup>23</sup> Their goal is similar to black resistance organizations prior to it. The abolitionist wanted to end slavery, and black activists during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century looked to build themselves up from slavery and become full American citizens. The civil rights movement of the 1960s fought for equal rights and treatment, and lastly, the Black Power movement fought for equality and racial pride. The overall goal of each of these organizations is to better Black lives. Their goals fall in line with the new Black Lives Matter goal.

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<sup>21</sup> Kailee Scales, "What Defunding the Police really Means."

<sup>22</sup> Black Lives Matter, "What We Believe."

<sup>23</sup> "About", Black Lives Matter, 28 March 2022.

They attempted to achieve their ultimate goal through several tactics such as spreading awareness through social media, taking a knee, marching, boycotts, and sit-ins. Each movement uses the same tactics. Each uses the media to make the public aware of their fight, although differently. Each movement has a prevalent form of Black nationalism, though it was most present in the movements following the abolitionist. Finally, each movement uses some form of indirect and direct action to usurp the current state of affairs for the Black community. This thesis argues that this 21<sup>st</sup>-century grassroots organization is the product of the Black civil rights organizations prior to it based on the strategies and tactics. Therefore, to gain a better understanding of the current movement for Black lives, one must look at the beginnings of Black civil rights movements in America, the abolitionist movement.

## Chapter 1

### Abolitionist and Black Lives Matter Strategies

Abolitionists in the 19th century and Black Lives Matter, 21st-century activists, were deliberate in their actions. Both upset the status quo and envisioned a better life for African Americans. Enslaved African Americans and abolitionists used various tactics and strategies to escape bondage in the years between the American Revolution and the Civil War. Those tactics are similar today within the Black Lives Matter movement. This chapter compares the strategies of abolitionists and enslaved people to Black Lives Matter activists. The early American enslaved population would try to gain freedom by running away like Harriet Tubman or suing for their freedom, as Dredd Scott did. The abolitionists saw slavery as a disease that plagued the North American continent and wanted to stop it by any means necessary. Abolitionists helped those in forced servitude escape by positioning themselves on the moral high ground and using petitioning, speaking to the public, and producing publications to rouse the population to their side. Other abolitionists used more radical means to gain freedom for those enslaved, such as violence. Abolitionists used varying strategies and tactics to achieve their goals. They used direct and indirect action but also violent and nonviolent tactics in order to accomplish their God-given task. The abolitionists wholeheartedly believed that slavery was a sin and a crime against God. Much of this chapter will look at the strategies used by enslaved and escaped slaves and how the abolitionists used violence, if necessary, to help bring about the end of slavery. The conclusion of this paper will look at how Black Lives Matter activists both mimicked and diverged from their abolitionist predecessors.

### **Abolitionist's Indirect action**

The Abolitionist Movement began in the early 1800s comprised a diverse group of supporters. A few schools of thought carried out the abolishment of slavery. According to Mabee, there were three primary schools: The Quakers, The Garrisonians, and the Tappanites.<sup>24</sup> These three influential groups prescribed themselves to the path of nonviolence, but their levels of nonviolence differed. They used indirect action to persuade the United States citizens that slavery was immoral; retroactively, this became known as moral suasion. Indirect action in the case of a social movement can be defined as the primary players of the movement influencing the population to realize the primary's dreams and ambitions. In the abolitionists' case, they used moral suasion and other antislavery information. Abolitionists believed that slavery was immoral and an infringement on the nation's ideals and Christian conscience. The Quakers exemplify this point well. The Quakers, or The Religious Society of Friends, were some of the first to advocate for ending slavery in North America, "during the 1600s, they had begun to protest against slavery."<sup>25</sup> Founded in England by George Fox, they distinguished themselves from the other groups mentioned by being completely nonviolent in their approach to ending slavery. Nevertheless, the movement for the freedom of slaves had an early start. For example, in the Massachusetts Bay colony in 1641, Nathaniel Ward, a Quaker, stated the following:

There shall never be any bond-slavery, villanage, or captivity among us unless it be lawful captives taken in just wars, and such strangers as willingly sell themselves or are sold to us. And these shall have all the liberties and Christian usages which the law of God established in Israel concerning such persons doth morally require.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Carleton Mabee, *Black Freedom: The Nonviolent Abolitionists* (New York: Macmillan, 1970), 1.

<sup>25</sup> Mabee, *Black Freedom*, 2.

<sup>26</sup> Thomas Franklin Waters, *Ipswich in the Massachusetts Bay Colony* (Ipswich: Ipswich Historical Society, 1905), 212.

From this, one can see that the Quakers worked on freeing enslaved people within their denomination. "During the 1700s, especially under the lead of New Jersey tailor, John Woolman, they had gradually cleared their members ... from all slave holdings"<sup>27</sup>The Quakers believed in forgiveness, following the Quaker doctrine of "the light within" from the Bible. The scripture states, "The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world."<sup>28</sup> This doctrine was essential to the Quakers. The Quakers believed that everyone, including slaveholders, contained some type of good, which created the moral argument that slaveholders have God within them. Therefore, for them to own slaves and treat them poorly is not Godly. Religious fervor fueled the abolitionists and made others view them as religious fanatics. For example, "The revisionist believed that abolitionists were religious fanatics, that there was no moral reason for their actions."<sup>29</sup> Quakers during the Abolitionist Movement operated using indirect action. "Officially, they petitioned legislatures, asking for the abolition of slavery and for Negroes."<sup>30</sup> Quakers did not force their members to take more direct action against slavery, but some did, like Lucretia Mott, by joining in with the Garrisonians

Nevertheless, the abolitionists had a common goal to end slavery nonviolently if possible. Some demanded the immediate end of slavery, like William Lloyd Garrison, and others like Thomas Jefferson wanted gradual emancipation. Thomas Jefferson stated in a letter to Edward Coles, "I have seen no proposition so expedient on the whole, as that of the emancipation of those born after a given day, ... this would give time for a gradual extinction of that species of

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<sup>27</sup> Mabee, *Black Freedom*, 2.

<sup>28</sup> John 1:9, NIV, Holy Bible.

<sup>29</sup> Gilbert Hobbs Barnes, *The Antislavery Impulse, 1830-1844* (originally published 1933; New York: Harcourt Brace, 1964), x.

<sup>30</sup> Mabee, *Black Freedom*, 3.

labor ..."<sup>31</sup>. The gradualism plan that Jefferson proposed created a plan for slaves to be set free when they came of age. Contrary to that, William Lloyd Garrison states in *The Abolitionist*, "We shall advocate IMMEDIATE ABOLITION."<sup>32</sup> Abolitionists approached indirect action differently. However, one of their tactics was creating associations to assist in antislavery action. The Garrisonians were led by William Lloyd Garrison and based out of Boston, Massachusetts. "The strength of the Garrisonians was their uncompromising perseverance. Their weakness was their inclination to a spirit so severe that it helped arouse antagonism"<sup>33</sup> The Garrisonians were radical nonviolent and promoted more direct action to end slavery. They also accepted anyone. The Garrisonians were the core of the Anti-American slave society after the Tappanites.

The Tappanites, led by Lewis Tappan, were the core of the American Antislavery Society committee until the more radical Garrisonians and less radical Garrisonians split because of tactical differences. "The Tappanites identified with the American and Foreign Antislavery Society founded in 1840 and the American Missionary Association founded in 1846."<sup>34</sup> The Tappans played a dominant role in these organizations, which helped in their religious antislavery journey. The Tappanites were nonviolent in their quest to abolish slavery, but their nonviolence varied from person to person. Mabee gives an example of how Lewis Tappan and S.S. Joycelyn, another close member of the Tappanites, would use violence, if necessary, in defending their property against angry mobs while Arthur Tappan and Alvan Stewart, another

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<sup>31</sup> "Thomas Jefferson to Edward Coles, 25 August 1814," *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, Retirement Series, vol. 7, 28 November 1813 to 30 September 1814, ed. J. Jefferson Looney (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 603–605.

<sup>32</sup> William Lloyd Garrison, "The Abolitionist," *The Abolitionist* 1 (January 1833): 1.

<sup>33</sup> Mabee, *Black Freedom*, 2.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 4

close member of the Tappanites, would not.<sup>35</sup> In addition, the Tappanites used churches and political parties to maneuver themselves for the Abolitionist Movement. "Politically, they were strong among the supporters of the abolitionist Liberty Party, and religiously they were strong among the Congregationalists and Presbyterians."<sup>36</sup> These were the major abolitionist groups during the antebellum period. Some supported the movement but did not identify with these groups. For example, Fredrick Douglass, as a nonviolent Garrisonian, began his abolitionist journey as a Garrisonian and nonviolent, but he later became infrequently nonresistant.

Another form of indirect action the abolitionists used liberally was the power of the press. They used it to their advantage by spreading the argument that slavery was morally unjust. The abolitionists created newspapers like *the Liberator* by William Lloyd Garrison and later the *North Star* by Fredrick Douglass. These newsletters reached people in the North and the South, strengthening the Abolitionist Movement's resistance. The use of books was also essential to spread their message. Harriet Beecher Stowe's book *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was very influential. "Three hundred thousand copies were sold the first year, and about two million copies were sold worldwide by 1857."<sup>37</sup> It also became a popular stage production which at times led to episodes of direct action. Another book that profoundly impacted the Abolitionist Movement was Fredrick Douglass's *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. "The Narrative's initial edition of 5,000 copies was sold in four months."<sup>38</sup> Douglass's book later began to sell exponentially. "By 1850, a

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<sup>35</sup> Mabee, *Black Freedom*, 4.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Jared Brock, "The Story of Josiah Henson, the Real Inspiration for *Uncle Tom's Cabin*," *Smithsonian Magazine*, 16 May 2018, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/story-josiah-henson-real-inspiration-uncle-toms-cabin-180969094/>, accessed 15 February 2022.

<sup>38</sup> Benjamin Quarles, "Introduction," in *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*, ed. Benjamin Quarles (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), xiii.

total of some 30,000 copies of the Narrative had been published in America and the British Isles."<sup>39</sup>

The abolitionists also spread pamphlets to help garner support for their cause and increase awareness of their cause. For example, Judge Samuel Sewall wrote a pamphlet titled *The Selling of Joseph*. In this pamphlet, he uses doctrine from the Bible to persuade slaveholders that slavery is morally wrong by stating, "He that stealeth a Man and Selleth him, or if he found in his hand, he shall surely be put to Death...."<sup>40</sup> This parallels the concept that slavery was wrong in the eyes of God. Sewall later states, "It is most certain that all Men, as they are the Sons of Adam, are; and have equal Right unto Liberty, and all other outward Comforts of Life."<sup>41</sup> Another example of a pamphlet that shook the United States was David Walker's *The Appeal*.

David Walker's text was unsettling to some citizens of the United States because it called for the immediate abolition of slavery, which was profound for a Black person to say at the time. "The author's audacious message and his uncompromising style shocked white Americans."<sup>42</sup> Walker wrote *The Appeal* intending to place pride into the Black population and instill hope for freedom. David Walker's assault on the system of Slavery in *The Appeal* called for those enslaved to resist the misery placed upon them, but they must acquire freedom through their own means "...take it away from them, and put everything before us to death, in order to gain our

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<sup>39</sup> Quarles, "Introduction," xiii.

<sup>40</sup> Samuel Sewall, *The Selling of Joseph: A Memorial* (originally published 1700; Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1969).

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> David Walker, *Appeal* (Boston: David Walker, 1830), vii.

freedom which God has given us<sup>43</sup>" *The Appeal* called for direct action against the peculiar institution of slavery.

### **Abolitionist Direct Action**

Abolitionists used several tactics under the umbrella of direct action. They used boycotting, revolts, and, most infamously, The Underground Railroad. During the antebellum period, direct action affected slavery directly and negatively in terms of boycotting, "By the mid-1840s, the idea of boycotting schools was a familiar one among abolitionists, as was also the idea of boycotting slave produce, segregated churches, and segregated transportation."<sup>44</sup> For example, on June 30, 1838, *The Colored American* printed a section titled *Go by Foot, Brethren*, urging people of color to walk or use other means of travel to get to their destinations instead of taking the prejudice that accompanied public transportation during the time.<sup>45</sup> Also, from the same newspaper on January 30, 1864, an excerpt titled "The Pacific Appeal" described the railway companies losing a large amount of revenue in their use of prejudiced behavior against black people. It stated, "had they afforded them accommodations from the first, no one will deny that they would have yielded some revenue...."<sup>46</sup> The author of this excerpt also encouraged colored people to boycott the railways, "we hope colored men will not accept to ride on the platform of a car while his wife is refused a seat inside."<sup>47</sup> Aside from railways, abolitionists also boycotted the use of produce grown by slave labor.

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>44</sup> Mabee, *Black Freedom*, 159.

<sup>45</sup> "Go by foot, Brethren," *Colored American*, 30 June 1838.

<sup>46</sup> "Pacific Appeal. The City Railroad Companies before the Legislature." *Colored American*, 30 January 1864

<sup>47</sup> "Pacific Appeal..." *Colored American*.

The Free Produce movement was an international movement that called for people to stop purchasing goods made by slave labor, including but not limited to produce. The Free Produce movement began in the 1700s with the Quakers like John Woolman. "Just before the American Revolution, the New Jersey Quaker tailor John Woolman, in a lonely, agonizing testimony, abstained from using sugar and other slave-produced foods at a time when few others did so."<sup>48</sup> The idea behind the Free Produce Movement was to slow the income of slaveholders. In 1814, Quaker E. Hicks explained the Free Produce Movement's effect on slaveholders in his pamphlet *Observations on the Slavery of the Africans and Their Descendants*. He states, "It would be doubtless have a particular effect on the slaveholders, by circumscribing their avarice, and preventing their heaping up riches, and living in a state of luxury and excess on the gain of oppression...."<sup>49</sup> Essentially stating that the Free Produce will negatively affect the slaveholders and prevent them from becoming rich using slave labor. Quakers took to this form of direct action against slavery because it was considered peaceful.

Quakers also believed this method of protest to be efficient, stating " the boycott is one of the most efficient means of peacefully abolishing slavery."<sup>50</sup> By 1826, the Free Produce movement had spread to the Americas and garnered plenty of American support like William Lloyd Garrison, Theodore Weld, and Black abolitionists. The Black abolitionist Bishop Richard Allen of the African Methodist Episcopal Church helped in creating a Philadelphia association that vowed its members to buy slavery-free produce.<sup>51</sup> Advocates of the Freed produce movement promoted the use of goods not produced by slave labor by creating *The Non-Slave*

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<sup>48</sup>Mabee, *Black Freedom*, 185.

<sup>49</sup>Elias Hicks. *Letters of Elias Hicks. United States: Isaac T. Hopper*, (New York: Isaac T Hopper), 1834.16.

<sup>50</sup> Mabee, *Black Freedom*, 186.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 187.

*Holder*, a monthly periodical "...devoted chiefly to the advocacy of abstinence from the produce of slave labor."<sup>52</sup> The downside to non-slave produced goods was the quality and the level of difficulty to obtain. In a letter printed in *The Liberator*, Jonathan Walker expresses his concern, stating, "... slave produce comes in so many forms."<sup>53</sup> Walker shortly after states, "I subscribe for an antislavery or any other reformatory periodical. It comes to me through a post office managed by a slaveholder, printed on a slave grown paper"<sup>54</sup> In essence, Walker is saying he supports antislavery actions, but it is difficult to put into action because the use of slave labor is abundant. Boycotting goods produced by slave labor was helpful; it was not plausible because slave labor created a large portion of products. The abolitionists also tried an even more direct approach to helping their enslaved brethren, the Underground Railroad.

### **Underground Railroad**

For a portion of the movement, some abolitionists decided to go against the government in their tactics. They believed that to support the United States was to disobey God. "For Garrison, it came to be a sin to cooperate with the Constitution, which, contrary to the Declaration of Independence, supported slavery. . ." <sup>55</sup> Garrison went as far as to go against the government by not voting, a luxury only allowed to white men. The enslaved people also resisted the evil institution of slavery while on plantations. The enslaved tried anything to be free of their shackles. The forms of resistance that they used did not seem radical, but the slaves would do things like breaking tools, faking illness to take a break, or work slowly.<sup>56</sup> Those who succeeded in escaping enslavement, like Harriet Tubman or Fredrick Douglass, ran away or created maroon

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<sup>52</sup> *The Non Slave Holder*, Edited by Abm L. Penncock, Samuel Rhoads, and Geo W. Taylor, Vol 1. No.7. 53.

<sup>53</sup> Jonathan Walker, "Products of Slave Labor, *The Liberator*." Vol. XVII No. 10. 3.

<sup>54</sup> Walker, "Products of Slave Labor, *The Liberator*," 3.

<sup>55</sup> Mabee, *Black Freedom*, 244.

<sup>56</sup> Dr. Thomas Aiello, African to African American History to 1865, Lecture.

societies close to plantations during the colonial period. "Maroon communities were formed by escaped slaves in woods, swamps, and mountains throughout the southern United States."<sup>57</sup> For those enslaved that ran away and stayed away and formed, these colonies grew without the influence of colonists. One of the largest maroon Colonies was the Great Dismal Swamp, that lay between Virginia and North Carolina border.<sup>58</sup> Other maroon societies were formed with the help of Native Americans, like the black Seminoles in Florida. Seminoles would either buy an enslaved person or help one that ran away. In this case, the Seminole form of slavery was different from the colony's form. To the Seminoles, slaves were more akin to indentured servants. "The "owner" provided protection, and the "slave" paid a modest amount in return."<sup>59</sup> The Africans and Seminoles lived in a sort of feudal system. The Seminoles provided protection to the Africans from slave raiding, and in return, the Africans provided the Seminoles with crops and a portion of their livestock, such as corn, and in times of war, the African men would provide military services. The Africans also lived in separate villages near the Seminoles, and they sometimes cohabitated via marriage or as mentioned above being owned as a slave. Between runaway slaves and purchased slaves, there was no difference between the two in Florida. This kind of living allowed for the Africans and Seminoles to become close which in turned allowed for the development of the Black Seminoles. Africans and Seminoles intermarried a little. They shared some cultural aspects and fought the United States government together.

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<sup>57</sup> Tim Lockley and David Doddington. "MAROON AND SLAVE COMMUNITIES IN SOUTH CAROLINA BEFORE 1865." *The South Carolina Historical Magazine* 113, no. 2 (2012). 126.

<sup>58</sup> Lockley and Doddington, "MAROON AND SLAVE COMMUNITIES...,"127

<sup>59</sup> Kenneth Porter, Wiggins, Alcione M. Amos, and Thomas P. Senter, *The Black Seminoles: History of a Freedom-seeking People*, Gainesville, Florida: University Press of Florida, 1996, 5.

Afterward, during the antebellum period, those who escaped used The Underground Railroad to escape further North. Manisha Sinha states, "According to a recent estimate that includes runaway slaves that stayed in the south and absconded temporarily, around 50000 slaves ran away each year."<sup>60</sup> One of the most daring forms of noncooperation and resistance to the government that the abolitionists used was the Underground Railroad.

The Underground Railroad was a system of African American and white people that helped slaves escape from the South to the North. Strother states, "It consisted rather of a loosely knit plexus of individual centers, where a man or a family or a small group stood ready to receive such fugitives as might be sent them, to feed them and hide them as long as necessary, and then to send or conduct them along a line of escape."<sup>61</sup> The Railroad functioned from the early 1800s, after the Fugitive Slave Law of 1793, which made kidnapping Black people who had escaped slavery legal until the end of the Civil War and approval of the 13<sup>th</sup> amendment. The phrase "Underground Railroad" was first mentioned in the early 1800s when Tice Davids escaped bondage. "A slave named Tice Davids escaped from his owner in Ripley, Ohio, and immediately disappeared. The master searched the vicinity as thoroughly as he could but found no trace of his runaway bondsman. At length, he concluded ruefully, "He must have got- ten away by an underground road."<sup>62</sup> The Quaker Isaac T Hopper helped slaves escape. Historians know about his exploits through his work with the Anti-slavery Standard, where he wrote bi-

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<sup>60</sup> Manisha Sinha, *The Slave's Cause: A History of Abolition*, (Yale University Press, 2016), 382.

<sup>61</sup>Horatio T. Strother, *The Underground Railroad in Connecticut*, (Connecticut. Wesleyan, 2012), 6.

<sup>62</sup> Strother, *The Underground Railroad*, 5.

weekly narratives, the first seventy-nine of which are known as the *Tales of Oppression*.<sup>63</sup>

Hopper's feats started the Underground Railroad and helped thousands of slaves escape bondage.

In response to the Fugitive Slave Laws, abolitionists created a vigilance committee. In 1835, those looking to help enslaved people formed the New York branch of the vigilance committee. "A great proportion of these [escapees] were sent on, by rail or steamer or road, to New York City, where the Vigilance Committee, in existence by 1835 and operated mainly by Negroes, gave them protection and help."<sup>64</sup> The Underground Railroad functioned by having code words describing the different parts of the railroad's work, like tracks, stations, station master, and conductor. With the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, more routes led further north. Canada was safer for escapees because U.S. slave hunters could not kidnap people of African descent from Canada and take them back to the South. The Underground Railroad was a beneficial tactic in the abolition of slaves. "By 1839, it was already possible that five thousand out of twenty thousand blacks settled in New York City were fugitive slaves."<sup>65</sup> Aside from running away, the enslaved population and abolitionists took on another form of rebellion, revolts.

## **Revolts**

Although abolitionists did not initially use violence, although some did accept it towards the middle of the nineteenth century after the passing of the Fugitive Slave Law. Therefore, small acts of violence or even large-scale revolts were not uncommon during the era of slavery. One of the most notable revolts from the antebellum period was the Denmark Vesey rebellion,

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<sup>63</sup> Daniel Meaders, "Kidnapping Blacks in Philadelphia: Isaac Hopper's Tales of Oppression," 47.

<sup>64</sup> Strother, *The Underground Railroad*, 119.

<sup>65</sup> Mabee, *Black Freedom*, 275.

now a conspiracy. Denmark Vesey was a slave with a vast range of motion, meaning he could operate outside of the norm for a slave. Vesey later bought his freedom. He gathered support for his rebellion by creating an African Methodist Episcopal church in Charleston, South Carolina. "Secret meetings had gradually generated an extensive network encompassing scores of conspirators in the city and countryside."<sup>66</sup> Unfortunately, rogue members told their slave masters of the plan to revolt, and the masters shut down the revolt. The rebellion ended with the execution of Vesey and other slaves. "The subsequent trials led to thirty-five hanged, including Vesey himself, and thirty-eight more transported."<sup>67</sup> Charleston also enacted a new legislature that limited slaves. "Furthermore, the legislature passed and enforced an act in 1822 which barred them from leaving and reentering the state."<sup>68</sup>

The Denmark Vesey rebellion upset the idea that white Americans had about slaves. "And the events changed southern history by shattering white confidence in the docility of the enslaved, giving evidence of slaves' desire for freedom and inspiring newly prohibitive regulations of slaves and free blacks."<sup>69</sup> In recent years, it has been found that the Denmark Vesey revolt was a conspiracy. "The only conspiracy was by whites who wanted to eliminate free blacks such as Vesey and to close the African Methodist Episcopal Church that he and others attended."<sup>70</sup> For example, there are certain discrepancies between the court records and the testimonies of those captured. "To hide this white conspiracy, authorities edited their records of the investigation and trials, changing statements and destroying documents" Therefore, the

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<sup>66</sup> James O'Neil Spady, "Power and Confession: On the Credibility of the Earliest Reports of the Denmark Vesey Slave Conspiracy," 287.

<sup>67</sup> Spady. "Power and Confession," 287.

<sup>68</sup> Wikramanayake, Marina. *A World in Shadow*, 58.

<sup>69</sup> Spady, "Power and Confession," 287.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 288.

Denmark Vesey revolt is now a conspiracy, although it did serve a purpose. The Vesey insurrection struck fear into the hearts of white people during the antebellum period. The subsequent major revolt was the Nat Turner rebellion.

Nat Turner was a slave born in Southampton, Virginia. He believed that he had received a message from God to slay the enemies of God. "And on May 12, 1828, I heard a loud noise in the heavens, and the Spirit instantly appeared to me and said the Serpent was loosened, and Christ had laid down the yoke he had borne for the sins of men, and that I should take it on and fight against the Serpent, for the time was fast approaching, when the first should be last, and the last should be first."<sup>71</sup> February 12, 1831, he saw a solar eclipse and believed that was his sign to begin, so he and some of his trusted people began to plan their rebellion. On August 13, 1831 Turner and his comrades set out to do the Lord's work at the sight of another solar eclipse. "And immediately on the sign appearing in the heavens, the seal was removed from my lips, and I communicated the great work laid out for me to do to four in whom I had the greatest confidence, (Henry, Hark, Nelson, and Sam)..."<sup>72</sup> Turner and his comrades went from plantation to plantation, slaying white people and gathering slaves to his cause. In an interview, Turner stated that his forces amounted to fifty or sixty at one point during his campaign.<sup>73</sup> Turner and his group killed primarily women and children on their crusade. Of course, the Nat Turner rebellion angered white people, and they retaliated. Between Turner's capture and the dispersal of his posse, white people in the area retaliated by killing numerous slaves. Newspaper reporters gave different numbers as to how many negroes white people were killed, and one newspaper

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<sup>71</sup>Nat Turner, 1800?-1831, and Thomas R Gray. *The confessions of Nat Turner, the leader of the late insurrection in Southampton, Va.* 9.

<sup>72</sup> Turner and Gray, *The confessions of Nat Turner*, 10.

<sup>73</sup> Turner and Gray, *The confessions of Nat Turner*, 14.

declared forty negroes were closed, but later on, another newspaper declared over one hundred were killed.<sup>74</sup> The actions of the angered white colonists essentially set an example for those who tried to revolt. Turner avoided capture for some time, but he was eventually captured. Authorities found him hidden in a depression on the earth on October 30. Turner gave his confession while imprisoned and was later hung for his day and a half rebellion. Nat Turner's rebellion led to the destruction of the myth that slaves were happy in their lives of servitude.

Nat Turner's rebellion forced the United States to face slavery, igniting the Virginia slavery debate. Ultimately Virginia legislation continued the status quo for on slaves. "...by a vote of 65 to 58, however, the legislature declared it 'inexpedient' to attempt to abolish slavery at that time, and laws were based that forbade reading and writing among slaves, and that banned all Negroes, slaves, or free, from preaching or holding religious meetings unattended by a license white minister."<sup>75</sup> Nat Turner's rebellion is also said to have been caused by W.L. Garrison and his publication of *The Liberator* in 1831. *The Liberator* published a letter from a clergyman that stated, "one of the passengers stated that it was his opinion, and the opinion of many others, that Wm. L Garrison had contributed in no small degree to the excitement among blacks, which had eventuated in that sad catastrophe...."<sup>76</sup>

Bleeding Kansas and the Raid on Harpers Ferry were two acts of violence that pushed some abolitionists to see violence as a viable tactic in fighting for enslaved people's emancipation. "In the 1850s, abolitionists increasingly tended not only to accept small scale, defensive violence, as in protecting fugitive slaves but also to accept larger scale, more offensive

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<sup>74</sup> Herbert Aptheker, *American Negro Slave Revolts*, (Millwood, New York, 1977), 301.

<sup>75</sup> Workers of the Writers Program of the WPA in the State of Virginia. "*Virginia: A Guide to the Old Dominion*" (1992). 78.

<sup>76</sup> *The Liberator*, 10 September 1831.

violence."<sup>77</sup> Stephen A. Douglas, a Democratic senator from Illinois, introduced the Kansas Nebraska Act in 1854. Douglas made efforts to figure out a way to organize the land obtained during America's westward expansion, ending further discussion of slavery. His solution was popular sovereignty. Popular sovereignty "argued that in a democracy, residents of a territory, and not the federal government, should be allowed to decide on slavery within their borders."<sup>78</sup> The Kansas Nebraska act allowed the state's qualified citizens, land-owning white males, to decide if the territory would be a slave state or a free state via a vote. Congress states that "... the true intent and meaning of this act not to legislate slavery into any Territory or State, nor to exclude this act concern- it therefrom, but to leave the people thereof perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way...."<sup>79</sup> After the act's passing, pro-slavery supporters rushed to the Kansas territories to sway the vote. Those who went to settle this territory argued over who would govern the territory creating a pro-slavery legislature in Lecompton and an antislavery legislature in Topeka. The democrats of Washington supported the proslavery of Lecompton, and the republicans supported the antislavery legislature in Topeka. Soon after the creation of these areas, violence erupted.

On May 21, 1856, a group of pro-slavery citizens entered Lawrence, Kansas, "...and burned and sacked it, while its citizens stood trembling by and raised no hand in its defense."<sup>80</sup> In response, radical abolitionist John Brown and his sons lured five white men out of their homes and murdered them, now known as the Pottawatomie massacre. "John Brown raised his hand,

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<sup>77</sup> Mabee, *Black Freedom*, 318.

<sup>78</sup> Zach Garrison, *Popular Sovereignty Civil War on the Western Border: The Missouri-Kansas Conflict, 1854-1865*. The Kansas City Public Library.

<sup>79</sup> Pierce, Franklin. "Public Acts of the Thirty Third Congress of the United States." *The Library of Congress. A century of Law Making*

<sup>80</sup> W. E. B. Du Bois and John David Smith. *John Brown*. 74.

and at the signal, the victims were hacked to death with broadswords."<sup>81</sup> The violence was a foreshadowing of what was to come. Bleeding Kansas was a series of brutal guerrilla warfare bouts between two economic systems. Dubois states, "On the one side were all the machinery of government, close proximity to the battle-field and a deep-seated social ideal which did not propose to abide by the rules of the game; on the other hand, were strong moral conviction, pressing economic necessity and capacity for organization."<sup>82</sup> Violence in Kansas reached national attention and lasted for four years. In the end, Kansas entered the Union as a slave state in 1861, just before the Civil War.

John Brown was a radical abolitionist who wanted an immediate end to slavery, violently if called for it. During the four-year stretch of Bleeding Kansas, John Brown participated in some of the battles. For example, in The Pottawatomie massacre mentioned earlier, he also participated in the Battle of Black Jack to rescue his imprisoned sons and the Battle of Osawatimie, where Brown and supporters faced off against General John Reid. His most famous battle is the Harper's Ferry Raid. In 1859, John Brown planned to raid Harpers Ferry, a federal arsenal in Virginia, taking the guns and ammunition to arm the slaves of Virginia in hopes of causing an uprising in the southern states. John Brown's raid failed. Brown and some of his men entered the little engine house and captured the men headed into work. "As the day advanced, and citizens of Harper's Ferry commenced their usual avocations, they were separately captured, to the number of forty, as well as I could learn, and confined in one room of the fire-engine house of the armory, which seems early to have been selected as a point of defence."<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Du Bois and Smith, *John Brown*, 75.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

<sup>83</sup> "The John Brown Letters, Found in the Virginia State Library in 1901," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 10, no. 1 (1902), 19.

Brown failed when he waited too long, expecting significant support from slaves in the surrounding area. Instead, the opposing militia force cut off John Brown's route to escape.

"These companies, under the direction of Colonels R. W. Baylor and John T. Gibson, forced the insurgents to abandon their positions at the bridge and in the village and to withdraw within the armory enclosure, where they fortified themselves in the fire-engine house and carried ten of their prisoners for the purpose of ensuring their safety and facilitating their escape, whom they termed hostage...."<sup>84</sup> Brown's men were shot by the troops, which showed up one by one either as they tried to escape or when surrendering. "In the river floated the corpses of Kagi, Leeman, Stewart Taylor, and William Thompson. Imprisoned and near death lay Lewis Leary and Stevens. Copeland was a captive. On the street lay the dead bodies of Hazlitt and Newby."<sup>85</sup> After a raid that lasted a few days ended in a few minutes, the marines captured an injured John Brown. Brown was sent to trial and later executed for his attempt to cause an insurrection but during this period was vocal and still made a big impact. John Brown's and Nat Turner's actions showed how far some people would go to achieve freedom for those in bondage. After Brown's insurrection, the next major revolution would be the Civil War.

Abolitionists no doubt played a part in the cause of the Civil War. Their violent and nonviolent tactics and strategies for resisting slavery provided a catalyst for already splitting North and South. The cause for this sectionalism was the slave power that permeated political action and the economy during the antebellum era. This sectionalism continued with the vilification of slaveholders. Abolitionists would use enslaved Africans and African Americans' experiences to create the ideas of horrible slaveholders. Not all slave masters were evil, but there

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<sup>84</sup> "The John Brown Letters," *The Virginia Magazine*, 19.

<sup>85</sup> James Redpath, *The Public life of Captain John Brown*, 182.

is no such thing as a good slave master. This vilification is portrayed exceptionally in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, where she primarily bases the book on the experiences of Josiah Henson, an escaped slave.

### **Black Lives Matter**

Some Black Lives Matter activists strive to be nonviolent in their approach to stopping police brutality, and many of their actions fall under the direct-action umbrella term. These activists have utilized, thus far, different forms of protest using various forms of media. One of their goals is defunding the police in hopes of better treatment of the public, particularly all black lives.<sup>86</sup> To begin, Black Lives Matter Activists employ a daring form of protest. For example, Black Lives Matter activists employ disruptive protests: in Florida, protestors stopped traffic by marching in the streets;<sup>87</sup> in Boston, activists chained themselves to a subway train.<sup>88</sup> The tactics that these activists use disrupt day-to-day life. This disruption keeps them relevant in the mind of societal elites. However, some of these protests have turned violent. According to the *Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project*, "The vast majority of demonstration events associated with the BLM [Black Lives Matter] movement are nonviolent. In more than 93% of all demonstrations connected to the movement, demonstrators have not engaged in violence or destructive activity."<sup>89</sup> Therefore, their tactics are nonviolent but still effective in disturbing the status quo.

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<sup>86</sup> Black Lives Matter, "#DefundthePolice".

<sup>87</sup> Liane Morejon. #BlackLivesMatter demonstrators...

<sup>88</sup> Laura Crimaldi, *Commuters fume as highways are blocked...*

<sup>89</sup> Sam Jones and Roudabeh Kishi, "Demonstrations & Political Violence in America," *Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project*, 5.

The use of social media has been crucial for the sake of the movement. The hashtag for social media, such as #BlackLivesMatter, #ICantBreathe, #SayHerName, and #NoJusticeNoPeace, played an essential part in galvanizing people to stand for Black Lives Matter's cause. Via social media, these activists have the ability to show real-time footage of protests like the warzone that was Ferguson, Missouri, after Michael Brown's death.<sup>90</sup> In addition, social media outlets such as Twitter help display the raw footage of police brutality in various parts of the United States. For example, the video of George Floyd's death was spread through social media.<sup>91</sup> Social media is such a crucial part of this movement because it allows activists to network and coordinate on a global scale. Although because of their social media activities and disruptive tactics, the Black Lives Matter movement is met with backlash.

The backlash to Black Lives Matter activists tends to come from conservative sources. For example, President Trump tweets. "They are not "peaceful protesters," as Sleepy Joe and the Democrats call them, they are THUGS - "<sup>92</sup> President Trump's words are echoed by many who support him. According to some, Black Lives Matter is a hate group that wants to kill cops. In an interview with Brian Kilmeade to Sheriff David Clarke, Fox News labels the Black Lives Matter movement as a murder movement.<sup>93</sup> Sheriff Clark says in the interview that Black Lives Matter activists are cop haters.<sup>94</sup> Due to the spread of this rhetoric, the aggression that cops showed towards peaceful protestors escalated. *Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project* states, "Overall, ACLED data indicate that government forces soon took a heavy-handed approach to the growing protest movement...Data show that they [law enforcement] have disproportionately

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<sup>90</sup> Moni Basu. *Armored Vehicles...*

<sup>91</sup> Jon Emont, *How Protests Over George Floyd's Killing Spread Around the World*.

<sup>92</sup> Donald J. Trump. They are not "peaceful protesters!..

<sup>93</sup> Simon McCormack, "Fox News Suggests Black Lives Matter Is A 'Murder' Movement..."

<sup>94</sup> McCormack, "Fox News".

used force while intervening in demonstrations associated with the BLM movement, relative to other types of demonstrations."<sup>95</sup>

### **Conclusion**

In summary, although abolitionists and Black Lives Matter activists are alike in their tactics and in their struggle for the liberation of black people, they are also different in their approaches to liberation. Abolitionists used an indirect approach and a direct approach to fighting for the rights of people. "There is no denying the anger, the bitterness, the irascibility of the abolitionists."<sup>96</sup> Some who fought for the end of slavery understood that they had to take an honest and emotional approach to bring people to their cause. Black Lives Matter activists, on the other hand, aggressively use direct action. Their use of indirect action is mainly through social media to spread awareness and organize protests. In the form of direct action, they use surprise, direct tactics to take on their fight against police brutality. The grassroots organization Black Lives Matter is striving to end disparities in the Black community. The abolitionists were the first to fight for African descendants in America. The efforts of the enslaved people and the Abolitionist Movement laid the groundwork for every other movement after. Comparatively, the Abolitionist Movement and the Black Lives Matter movement include people from different backgrounds looking to change America. Nevertheless, both groups also share a commonality in how they spread information.

The abolitionists used pamphlets, books, and orators, while activists in the Black Lives Matter movement used social media. Social activists on Twitter are the reincarnation of Fredrick

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<sup>95</sup> Jones and Kishi, "Demonstrations & Political Violence in America," 7.

<sup>96</sup> Martin B Duberman, *The Antislavery Vanguard: New Essays on the Abolitionists*, (N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1965), 418.

and *the North Star* or William Loyd Garrison and *the Liberator*. Fundamentally, the two organizations have the same concept, spreading knowledge, but the medium of information and misdeeds have changed. The abolitionists and Black Lives Matter activists also differ in their organizational structure. The abolitionists had somewhat clear leaders, a defined structure, and several committees, whereas the Black Lives Matter structure is loose with three co-founders. The Black Lives Matter organization also has different Black Lives Matter chapters worldwide. Both groups contain a fiery passion for their cause, which has earned them the accolade of radicals or extremists in their pursuit against injustice.

## Chapter 2

### Early 1920s and Black Lives Matter Strategies

#### Introduction

Early 20th century tactics to combat racism had a lasting effect on American society. Jim Crow laws were in full effect, and lynching was commonplace. However, even under the weight of oppression African Americans brought about an era for new beginnings. Cities in the North saw an explosion in population growth with the dawn of the Great Migration, spurring intellectual movements like the Harlem Renaissance, which popularized Black culture in New York and spread throughout the United States. In 1939, Billie Holiday released the song "Strange Fruit," describing the horrors of lynching in the South. Organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the National Urban League (N.U.L.), and the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) rose to fight the oppression of Black Americans. These organizations left a legacy that further paved the way for future activists to fight against oppression. This chapter will discuss the strategies and tactics of activists during the early 20th century and compare them to the present-day Black Lives Matter activists.

#### Early Organizations

The Reconstruction era began towards the end of the Civil War, when many African Americans saw an improvement in their quality of life after the assassination of Abraham Lincoln and the rise of Andrew Johnson to the presidency. During the aftermath of the Civil War the 13<sup>th</sup> amendment was passed. It states, "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the

United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.”<sup>97</sup> The 13<sup>th</sup> amendment effectively abolished slavery within the United States. Johnson wanted the South to have a say in what to do with the former slaves. Before his assassination, Lincoln favored the rights of all freedmen. After a great deal of violence during Johnson's term, the Republicans were the majority in congress, which led to the 14th amendment in 1866. The 14th amendment states, "nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws..."<sup>98</sup>, effectively giving equal rights and citizenship to African Americans. There was also the passing of the 15th amendment in 1870. It stated, "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude—."<sup>99</sup> The 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments were known as the Reconstruction amendments. These Reconstruction amendments formed the basis for civil rights activists that came afterwards.

Early 20th century organizations that helped the newly freed African Americans were crucial in the development civil rights activism. One crucial organization in particular that came about during the Reconstruction era was The Freedmen's Bureau. The Freedmen's Bureau assisted those freed from bondage in education by setting up schools and churches. The Freedmen's Bureau also negotiated labor contracts and protected freedmen from legal and political adversity. However, Reconstruction amendments sparked controversy in the South, which led to the rise of the Ku Klux Klan. Amongst the changing tides of America, different groups begin to form to help African Americans pursue a better life. Organizations such as the

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<sup>97</sup> United States Constitution, Amendment 13.

<sup>98</sup> United States Constitution, Amendment 14.

<sup>99</sup> United States Constitution, Amendment 15.

Afro-American League and Afro-American Council helped structure future organizations. According to author Shawn Alexander, these organizations could not prosper and garner a mass following due to lack of financial support, despite their best efforts.<sup>100</sup> One early 20th-century organization that conceded to the same fate as earlier organizations but still carries great importance is the Niagara Movement.

W.E. B Dubois, historian, sociologist, editor, and civil rights activist created The Niagara Movement. Author Angela Jones considers the Niagara Movement was pivotal in forming the later civil rights movement. Jones also believed the Niagara Movement was more than a precursor to the NAACP as indicated in her book *African American Civil Rights: Early Activism and the Niagara Movement*.<sup>101</sup> Dubois created the Niagara Movement out of the frustration he and others experienced due to societal oppression in America. Dubois contacted select members to help him in his endeavor to end the oppression that took place. The Niagara movement made its name because of where the meeting was called, the Canadian side of the Niagara Falls on Erie beach in Ontario. They went there because they could not receive accommodations in Buffalo, New York, where Dubois first intended to call the meeting. Dubois created The Niagara Movement to fight racial oppression and disenfranchisement. The Niagara Movement forcefully demanded equal economic and educational opportunity and the right to vote for Black men and women. Members of the Niagara Movement sent a powerful message to the entire country through their condemnation of racial discrimination and their call for an end to segregation. They did this with a declaration of principles, which stated the following:

We want full manhood suffrage, and we want it now, henceforth, and forever.

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<sup>100</sup> Shawn Leigh Alexander, *An Army of Lions: The Civil Rights Struggle before the NAACP*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), XV.

<sup>101</sup> Angela Jones, *African American Civil Rights: Early Activism and the Niagara Movement* (. Santa Barbara, Calif.: Praeger, 2011), 1.

Second. We want discrimination in public accommodation to cease. Separation in railway and streetcars, based simply on race and color, is un-American, un-democratic, and silly. We protest against all such discrimination.

Third. We claim the right of freemen to walk, talk, and be with them that wish to be with us. No man has a right to choose another man's friends, and to attempt to do so is an impudent interference with the most fundamental human privilege.

Fourth. We want the laws enforced against rich as well as poor; against Capitalist as well as Laborer; against White as well as Black. . .

Fifth, We want our children educated...<sup>102</sup>

Dubois and the other members of the Niagara movement looked to spread the message by creating a different chapter. They also tried their hand in the legal system. For example, the Niagara movement lobbied against segregationist laws. The one that led to their downfall was the case against the Virginia railroad which proved to be an expensive endeavor and put them into debt. Dubois's creation had growing but limited numbers and funds. What also contributed to the decline of the Niagara Movement was the part they played in the 1908 elections. The Niagara Movement looked to spread awareness and urge people to vote for the Democratic party because President Theodore Roosevelt dismissed the Brownsville soldiers. Republican Candidate William H. Taft stood with Roosevelt in this decision. Dubois on the other hand, did not. Dubois states, "If between the two parties who stand on identically the same platform you can prefer the party who perpetuated Brownsville, well and good! But I shall vote for Bryan."<sup>103</sup> Dubois created the Niagara movement not only for the civil rights of African Americans but also to counter accommodationist tactics created by Booker T Washington.

Booker T Washington was another pre-civil rights leader in early 20th-century activism. Washington believed in self-improvement and standard labor. In one of his most famous speeches, he states, "In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet

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<sup>102</sup> W.E.B Dubois. "Niagara Movement Speech."

<sup>103</sup>David Levering Lewis, *W.E.B. Dubois*. (New York: H. Holt, 1993), 341.

one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress."<sup>104</sup> Essentially saying let the Black population do what it wants, and the White population do what it wants but on the grounds of progress we must work together. Fundamentally, African Americans and White Americans should work together towards mutual progress. Washington was looked to employ the strategy of economic development for African Americans. He states, "Ignorant and inexperienced, it is not strange that in the first years of our new life we began at the top instead of at the bottom; that a seat in Congress or the state legislature was more sought than real estate or industrial skill; that the political convention or stump speaking had more attractions than starting a dairy farm or a truck garden."<sup>105</sup> He emphasizes the need for vocational workers to impact the economic development of the South. Washington traveled the country making speeches to garner funds to help build schools for the development of African Americans, particularly in the way of skilled craftsmanship and agriculture. Washington's strategy was to tell White Americans what they wanted to hear. Primarily, Black people will continue working in labor positions to better themselves in the South. Although Washington's strategy received criticism, it did provide results. The Tuskegee Institute was the first opportunity for Black people to receive a higher education focusing on skilled craftsmanship. Washington's critics felt that he did not place enough emphasis on racial discrimination and violence against Blacks. Dubois felt that Washington's strategy did not allow for academic achievement, and thus, he created the Niagara Movement. Both men fought for civil rights, the upward mobility and economic freedom of Black people in America. Although they went about reaching those goals in different ways.

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<sup>104</sup> Booker T. Washington, *Address By Booker T. Washington, Principal Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, Tuskegee, Alabama, At Opening Of Atlanta Exposition*, 4.

<sup>105</sup> Washington, *Address*, " 1.

Dubois supported immediate change whereas Washington seemed to support gradualism and segregation.

### NAACP

In 1908 a race riot broke out in Springfield, Illinois, where a mob of White residents attacked its Black residents. "The mob was composed of several thousand of Springfield's White citizens, while other thousands, including many women and children and even prosperous businessmen in automobiles, calmly looked on..."<sup>106</sup> Two Black men were accused and arrested of attempting to rape and murder two White women. A mob of White men looking to lynch the Black men soon realized that the sheriff had transported the men out of town. Furious, the White mob attacked the Black residents killing Black people, destroying Black businesses and homes. "... and the rioters proceeded hour after hour and in two days in succession to make deadly assaults on every negro they could lay their hands on, to sack and plunder their houses their stores, and to burn and murder on favorable occasion."<sup>107</sup> This race riot is one case that showed that racism was prevalent throughout the country because it happened in the north, where White people were supposed to be more progressive. Walling states that one of the cries from the mob of White citizens in Springfield, Illinois was "Lincoln freed you, we'll show you where you belong,"<sup>108</sup> as they sought to push African Americans out of town in 1908. In response to this act of violence, The National Negro Committee was born.

Mary White Ovington, William Walling, and Henry Moskowitz created a national conference. This conference was for the civil and political rights of Afro Americans. Many responded to the call on 12 February 1909, and on 1 June, the creation of the national negro

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<sup>106</sup> William English Walling, "The Race War in the North." *The Independent*, 3 September 1908, 529.

<sup>107</sup> Walling, *The Race War*, 529.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*

committee was final, with many of the new organization's members were from the Niagara movement. After the second meeting, the National Negro Committee christened the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The NAACP had similar goals to the Niagara Movement due to the involvement of Dubois and followers of both. The NAACP was an interracial organization that fought to abolish segregation, discrimination, disenfranchisement, and racial violence, particularly lynching.

For example, after the reporting of every lynching, the NAACP would hang a flag out the window that stated, "A man was lynched yesterday"<sup>109</sup> The NAACP achieved their goals like the Niagara movement, through legal action and demonstrations. For example, members of the NAACP called for a boycott on the movie *Birth of Nation* (1915). This movie showed the Ku Klux Klan positively as the heroic savior of American values and painted African Americans as stereotypes such as aggressive and hypersexual. Anti-lynching was the NAACP's primary standpoint in their early year. In 1917 the NAACP held a silent march in which thousands of people participated. Their efforts to stop lynching brought awareness to the murders that took place in America. The NAACP continued to grow in its early years. The organization gained approximately 90000 members and over 300 chapters by 1919. The NAACP strove towards remaking what the reconstruction era had already made in the South, a biracial democracy. The NAACP would not be what it is today without a few key members, one of those key members being W.E.B. Dubois.

Dubois's involvement with the organization was mainly as an editor for the NAACP's newsletter. *The Crisis* helped spread the message of the NAACP far and wide, much like the David Walker pamphlet, *The Appeal*. The NAACP's newsletter began in 1910 and is one of the

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<sup>109</sup> "A Man was lynched yesterday." *NAACP*. Library of Congress 1936.

oldest Black publications to date. Dubois states in the first issue of *The Crisis*, "the object of this publication is to set forth those facts and arguments which show the danger of race prejudice, particularly as manifested today toward colored people."<sup>110</sup> The NAACP is significant to early 20<sup>th</sup> century activism because the organization fought for the legal right of African Americans and still continues to do so till this day. Their efforts to combat racism during the 20<sup>th</sup> century were boisterous especially with their newsletter.

### **The National Urban League**

The National Urban league came to be in the early 1900s as well. The organization worked to dispel racial discrimination within the civic life of African Americans. "The N.U.L. was founded by Negroes and Whites who were interested in containing and resolving racial conflict, reducing the incidents of industrial strife, and improving the social-economic political, and health conditions of a rapidly expanding urban Negro Population."<sup>111</sup> During its earliest years, the N.U.L was known as The National League of Urban Conditions Among Negroes and drew its roots from the National League for the Protection of Colored Women and the Committee on Urban Conditions Among Negroes. These organizations merged to create the National Urban League in 1911. The strategies and personalities of Eugene Jones, Lester Granger, and George E. Haynes personified The National Urban League. Each of them went about their leadership roles in different ways.

For example, according to Jesse Moore, "Jones believed that that the N.U.L.'s (National Urban League) job was to prepare Negroes for the time when changed attitudes and expanded

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<sup>110</sup> *The Crisis*, November 1910, 10.

<sup>111</sup> Jesse Thomas Moore, *A Search for Equality: the National Urban League, 1910 -1961*, (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1981), 203.

industry would create vast new job opportunities for those who had the qualifications."<sup>112</sup>

Granger's take on what the N.U.L. was different from Jones's perspective. "Granger urged constitutional; guarantees for his fellow Negroes and was less patient than Jones with such stabilizing factors law and order, and a gradualist type democracy."<sup>113</sup> The mission of the League is as follows:

"To help African-Americans and others in underserved communities achieve their highest true social parity, economic self-reliance, power, and civil rights. The League promotes economic empowerment through education and job training, housing and community development, workforce development, entrepreneurship, health, and quality of life."<sup>114</sup> The National Urban League began the conquest by training Black people in social work. "When the Urban League was founded, social work as a profession was in its infancy; social work for Blacks, and more particularly, Black social workers were even less common."<sup>115</sup>

Members of the Urban League tackled the lack of social workers issue in Black community by creating a department of social work. "When he [Haynes] became executive secretary of the Committee on Urban Conditions in 1910, Haynes also joined the faculty of Fisk University to organize a department of social science to train Black social workers."<sup>116</sup> The creation of the social work program succeeded, and it soon grew into an entire curriculum and hoped to open a center to help push the curriculum further. "His hopes were realized in 1914 with the opening of the Bethlehem Training center under the auspices of the Urban League, Fisk University, and the Women's Missionary Council, M.E Church."<sup>117</sup> This center soon grew and was able to have its own curriculum, and later, he was able to provide applied practical knowledge for Black social workers. "The program combined classroom study at Fisk with

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<sup>112</sup> Moore, *A Search for Equality*, 86.

<sup>113</sup> Moore, *A Search for Equality*, 87.

<sup>114</sup> National Urban League. "Mission and History."

<sup>115</sup> Nancy J. Weiss, *The National Urban League, 1910-1940* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), 71.

<sup>116</sup> Weiss, *The National Urban League*, 74.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

fieldwork in juvenile courts, in Negro neighborhoods, and at Bethlehem house, a settlement created by three cooperating institutions and supported by the Women's Missionary Council."<sup>118</sup> The N.U.L also provided scholarships to young leaders in the Black community. "During its earliest years, the Urban League offered material aid to potential urban leaders through scholarships for students at Black colleges that had affiliated with the Urban League movement."<sup>119</sup> Many of these colleges were Black colleges that looked to improve upon what Haynes had built at Fisk University. "These colleges, which included Howard, Virginia Union, Talladega, Morehouse, and Paine, had agreed to develop social science courses, along with lines of those Haynes had established at Fisk, and to cooperate with the League in furthering its educational objectives."<sup>120</sup> The first few years of the League were a time for experimentation, and the social science curriculum was one of its most significant innovations. The League also reached out to the community to help those moving from the South. Black children outside of scholarships also received help from The League. The work of the Urban League was especially prevalent during the great migration and the great depression.

During the Great Migration, the North saw an influx of African Americans exiting from the South, who left the South for various reasons. "Most agreed that these should properly fall into two categories of motives: one set, comprising pushing forces, about long-standing conditions in the south."<sup>121</sup> These "pushing" forces, for example, are the numerous cases of racial discrimination and lack of work that plighted the South. During this time, the South was largely cotton-producing until boll weevil infiltrated the South and destroyed crops in 1915. Floods also ravaged the South. As a result, there were too many workers and not enough work for those in

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 75.

<sup>119</sup> Weiss, *The National Urban League*, 77.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 95.

the South. "The other – "pulling" forces -arose from circumstances in northern cities that were occasioned by the war" The North was the land of opportunity for African Americans. These new industrial centers looked for workers because of World War I and immigration restrictions. The N.U.L played its part by facilitating these workers to the industries looking for workers. For example, "the Urban League itself contributed to the monumentality of the migration, both by sending Blacks to the tobacco fields in the Connecticut River Valley and, more generally, by advertising for laborers in northern industries."<sup>122</sup>

The N.U.L created a program to help at-risk youth. "The League imitated Big Brother and Sister programs that brought delinquent youngsters under the influence of mature, responsible adults through regular personal contact."<sup>123</sup> The Big Brother Big Sister program was essentially a mentor-mentee program to keep the youth out of trouble. The N.U.L also helped African American youth outside of the program. "In addition to its Big Brother and Sister work, the League sponsored boys' and girls' clubs at churches, settlements, and schools, and persuaded the City Park Department to establish a public playground in Harlem."<sup>124</sup> Members of the League also offered help outside of those, as mentioned above. "In addition, League staff members offered personal counsel, shelter, and employment assistance to women new to the city."<sup>125</sup> The N.U.L was significant because it helped the Black community on a local scale and nationally with finding jobs, creating programs for children as well as training social workers. The Urban League worked to create opportunities for the Black community and open doors that were closed by racism.

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<sup>122</sup> Weiss, *The National Urban League*, 100.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 84.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, 83.

## **Marcus Garvey and the UNIA**

Marcus Garvey created The Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). The UNIA empowered those with African ancestry around the world. Garvey was born in Jamaica and raised in poverty under British colonialism. He understood race relations under this colonialism because of the self-hate that colonizers instilled in their colonies throughout the Caribbean and Latin America. As Garvey grew and began to understand the world around him better, he read Booker T. Washington's autobiography *Up from Slavery*. He became inspired to fight for himself and his people. In 1914 Garvey created the UNIA to develop education, build racial pride, and unify Black people across the globe. In 1916 Garvey came to the United States and formed a UNIA chapter in Harlem, New York. The UNIA spread worldwide, and many were in the United States.

Marcus Garvey and the UNIA were able to mobilize thousands of African Americans and instill racial pride. These feats took place when the White population saw African Americans as inferior. Marcus Garvey was charismatic, and he used a considerable amount of grandeur to display himself and the UNIA. Garvey's message of Black pride mobilized thousands of Black people to fend for themselves in a fraternal order known as the UNIA. As stated by Dubois, "he is able to stir them with singular eloquence and the general run of his thought... he has become to thousands of people a sort of religion."<sup>126</sup> Garvey wanted a separate African American community, "...there should be a free and independent Africa controlled by negroes"<sup>127</sup> Garvey had the idea of buying ships through the financial support of local African American people to transport goods and people. The creation of the Black Star Line was both the best and worst

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<sup>126</sup> John Henrik Clarke, *Marcus Garvey and the Vision of Africa*. (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), 203.

<sup>127</sup> "Negro Self Assertion". *New York Tribune*. 18 September 1921. 26.

thing to happen to the UNIA. It was the best because it gave African descent hope for the back to Africa movement and gave them a ship. Marcus Garvey states, "Remember, the Black Star Steamship corporation is not a private company. The ships that are owned by this corporation are the property of the Negro race."<sup>128</sup> However, the Black Star Line also exposed the corruption that went on inside of the UNIA.

Garvey obtained four ships, the Yarmouth or Frederick Douglass, the Shadyside, the Kanawha, and the Phyllis Wheatley. Garvey earned the money by selling stocks in the Black Star Line for \$5 per stock through the Negro World and the UNIA's newsletter.<sup>129</sup> The Yarmouth was purchased in poor condition and repaired to sail. Yarmouth operated for three years with a mainly Black crew and Captain Joshua Cockburn. There was always trouble with the Yarmouth from the beginning, from White engineers making trouble to cargo theft. "From Cuba, Cockburn informed Garvey that the White engineers had tried to run the ship around. A few days later, on 5 December, Cockburn again complained that the White engineers were causing trouble."<sup>130</sup> There was also an incident where the Yarmouth carried a shipment of whiskey. Cockburn ordered 500 cases thrown overboard "so that she might be saved from foundering" after the Yarmouth began to leak.<sup>131</sup> Allegedly, speakeasies became the new home for cases thrown overboard.<sup>132</sup> It also came out later that Cockburn received money from the seller, and the ship was sold to the UNIA for a much higher price than what it was worth. According to Hugh Mulzac, the boat wasn't

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<sup>128</sup> Tony Martin, *Race First: The Ideological and Organizational Struggles of Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association*. (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1976), 151.

<sup>129</sup> "Widening Horizons". *The Negro World*, Vol. IX, No. 26. New York, Saturday, 12 February 1921.

<sup>130</sup> Martin, *Race First*, 153.

<sup>131</sup> "U.S. to Seize Whisky Cargo of Yarmouth." *New York Tribune*. 4 February 1920. 24.

<sup>132</sup> "U.S. to Seize," 24.

worth over \$25000, and it was sold to the UNIA for \$165000.<sup>133</sup> By the third and final trip of the Yarmouth, Joshua Cockburn had been fired for dishonesty and replaced by Captain Dixon. The Yarmouth was taken out of business due to its cost to repair, \$289066.27,<sup>134</sup> and was sold for \$1625 by the U.S. Marshall.<sup>135</sup> The following two ships followed a similar pattern of shady dealings on getting an old ship and breaking down after repairs. For example, Dubois states in *The Crisis*, "The Kanawha or Antonio Maceo was listed in the Black Star report as worth \$75,359.01. Garvey swore that he paid \$60,000 for it."<sup>136</sup> This is evidence that someone pocketed the extra \$15000. The ship was later put out of commission due to boiler issues. "...the boat was held up in Cuba because of boiler troubles, although several thousand dollars had been recently spent on new boilers."<sup>137</sup> The Shadyside was out of commission shortly after its purchase. "The Shadyside was listed by the Black Star Line as worth \$35,000. It did a small excursion business up the Hudson during the summer of 1920. In March 1921, the Shadyside lay on the beach beside North River at the foot of 157th Street and was in a hopeless condition, quite beyond repair."<sup>138</sup> The last ship purchased by the UNIA, the Phylis Wheatley, led to the downfall of Marcus Garvey.

Garvey and the UNIA announced that they would be expecting the new ship on 1 May 1921, but it never came. On 30 September 1921, Marcus Garvey came to defend himself, essentially stating that the Orion vessel to be named Phyllis Wheatley was supposed to have a down payment of \$25000 and that ship should have been delivered on 21 April.<sup>139</sup> After some

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<sup>133</sup> Hugh Mulzac; Louis E Burnham; Norval Welch, *A Star to Steer*. (New York: International Publishers, 1963), 78.

<sup>134</sup>W. E. B. Dubois, "The Black Star Line," *Crisis*, September 1922, 210.

<sup>135</sup> Dubois, "The Black Star Line," 210.

<sup>136</sup> Dubois, "The Black Star Line," 211.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, 212.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*

research, Garvey finds out that the money was stolen. Dubois states, "In other words, Mr. Garvey says that officials of the Black Star Line, whom he is careful not to name, stole so much of the deposit money that the Phyllis Wheatley could not be secured for the line."<sup>140</sup> Garvey left the states, and when he returned in July, tickets for passage on the Phyllis Wheatley were still for sale until October, although they did not have the ship. Later that year, Garvey and some fellow officers were indicted for mail fraud. "As a result, Mr. Garvey and three of his chief officials were indicted by the Grand Jury of the District Court of the United States for the Southern District of New York, for "using the mails in furtherance of a scheme to defraud and conspiring so to do."<sup>141</sup> Garvey blamed several for the failure of the Black Star Line, like the NAACP. For example, Dubois cites Garvey "All the troubles we have had on our ships have been caused because men were paid to make this trouble by certain organizations calling themselves Negro Advancement Association. They paid men to dismantle our machinery and otherwise damage it to bring about the downfall of the movement."<sup>142</sup> However, Garvey was an excellent leader, was not a good businessman. Dubois wrote, "the great difficulty with him is that he has no business sense, no flair for real organization. On the other hand, Garvey is an extraordinary leader of men."<sup>143</sup> Garvey and the UNIA's use of the Black Star Steamship corporation was a monumental idea for the Black world but had poor execution. Although there were several subgroups of the UNIA after Garvey's prison sentence and deportation, it never again reached the same height. During his time, Garvey faced backlash from White and Black people, known as the Garvey must go Campaign. Dubois, Philip A. Randolph, and other supporters disagreed with Garvey's methods, although they did respect his skill as a propagandist. Chandler Owen, co-editor of *The*

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<sup>140</sup> Ibid., 213.

<sup>141</sup> Dubois, "The Black Star Line", 213.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> Clarke, *Vision of Africa*. 203.

*Messenger*, referred to Garvey as the Jamaican Jackass and openly critiqued the back to Africa movement and Garveyism. Marcus Garvey's strategy in helping the Black community were bold and not too different from the ways of Booker T. Washington in terms of the two races being separate. Garvey's strategy for creating a separate economy and society for Black people was to build. "...Garvey turned his attention to opening businesses of all kinds in Black communities across this country which would employ Black men and women, thereby sapping unemployment, which would help to develop local self-sufficiency among them"<sup>144</sup> in building these businesses, Garvey began to realize separate Black economic institutions although in the end they did not work out. The charismatic Garvey also gave the Black community a sense of belonging with the UNIA, in a world where White people saw them as nobody.

### **Harlem Renaissance**

The Great Migration played a major role in creating the Harlem Renaissance. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, legislation limited immigration, which severely affected industrial institutions in the north, producing a labor shortage. "Cities that experienced substantial changes in racial composition between 1910 and 1940 include Chicago, Detroit, New York City, and Philadelphia."<sup>145</sup> During the height of Jim Crow, African Americans began moving from the South to the north. "Poor economic conditions in the Jim Crow South spurred a larger migration flow than was the case in the 1910-to-1940 period and resulted in creating large Black population centers in many cities across the Northeast, Midwest, and West."<sup>146</sup> These migrations resulted in the Harlem Renaissance, one of the most iconic periods of the 1920s. African Americans created a cultural revolution that would influence America for years to come. During

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<sup>144</sup> Milfred C. Fierce, "Economic Aspects of the Marcus Garvey Movement." *The Black Scholar* 3, no. 7/8 (1972), 50.

<sup>145</sup> United States Census Bureau. "*The Great Migration, 1910 to 1970.*"

<sup>146</sup> United States Census Bureau. "*The Great Migration.*"

one of the most oppressive times, African Americans created extraordinary art. African Americans created art such as jazz, notable authors to this day also came to be during this time, such as Jean Toomer, Wallace Thurman, Countee Cullen, Langston Hughes, Nella Larsen, Zora Neale Hurston, and Alaine Locke. Locke produced an anthology called the *New Negro*, which encompassed works from various artists. The New Negro also became the movement's name that came out of the Harlem Renaissance. The New Negro Movement comprised African Americans who were at this time two generations out of slavery. They used fine art to help garner political and racial rights and show people that they were intelligent, thinking life forms that could produce art at the same level as anyone else, essentially showing their worth to the country.

Dubois, Locke, and other members of the Black elite were accused of manufacturing the Harlem Renaissance and using the art of Black creators as a tool to fight against oppression. As a result, Black leaders during the Harlem Renaissance formed alliances with progressive, wealthy, and sympathetic White people to fund the Harlem Renaissance. In return, the rich wanted them to produce art. This affluent group included the likes of Rockefeller and William E. Harmon. William E Harmon was an instrumental figure in the Harlem Renaissance era because he created a philanthropic foundation that showcased Black art throughout the century. The Harmon Foundation curated exhibitions that showcased Black artistry to help Black artists become financially stable. Every art piece was for sale, and first place of the Harmon Foundation exhibition would receive financial compensation for their work. Aaron Douglass was the father of Black Americans. Douglass's work came to represent Black America by using African themes and African American subjects. Douglass centered his artwork around African American social issues and segregation. James Weldon Johnson conscripted Douglass to illustrate several works,

like *the Crisis* and *God's Trombones: Seven Negro Sermons in Verse*.<sup>147</sup> The Harlem Renaissance debunked White depiction of Black people made popular by minstrel shows and other forms of entertainment. This cultural movement introduced many works of fine art to the public and allowed Black people to portray themselves in a new light.

The Harlem Renaissance created a space to for Black America acting members of society and to dispel the idea that they were uneducated, ill-mannered and maids to White America. There were also social interactions in places like the Savoy and Cotton club that helped debunk Black stereotypes. Unfortunately, the Harlem Renaissance halted during the depression. David Levering states, "The Depression accelerated a failure that was inevitable, for the Harlem Renaissance could no more have succeeded as a positive social force, whatever the Wall Street, that its participants could have persuaded to try a different stratagem of racial advancement."<sup>148</sup>

### **Black Nationalism**

During the early 20th century Black people wanted to prove that their race was not inferior. The idea that they needed to prove that their race was indeed on par with other races spurred the concept of Black nationalism. Black nationalism is a forever-changing phenomenon, but there is one constant thing. Wilson Jeremiah Moses defines it best; he states, "there is one essential quality of Black nationalism. However, it is the feeling on the part of Black individuals that they are responsible for the welfare of other Black individuals, or of Black people as a collective, entity, simply because of a shared racial heritage and destiny."<sup>149</sup> Black nationalism advocates for self-determination and unity within the Black community, especially in politics, financial freedom, and The Harlem Renaissance movement to push the advancement through

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<sup>147</sup> Nancy Anderson, "Aaron Douglas/*The Judgment Day*/1939," *American Paintings, 1900–1945*.

<sup>148</sup> David Levering Lewis, *When Harlem Was in Vogue*. (New York: Penguin Books, 1997), 305

<sup>149</sup> Wilson Jeremiah Moses, *The Golden Age of Black Nationalism, 1850-1925*. (University Park: Pennsylvania State University, 1981), 20.

fine art. The same can be said for the UNIA movement, but they looked for African descendants to gain financial freedom through business dealing. "UNIA leaders continued to a social racial progression with business ownership."<sup>150</sup> This can be seen with the creation of the Blackstar steamship corporation. Through financial deception and terrible management, the Black star line failed to succeed on that front. It did succeed in pulling together many African Americans and showing that Black people will fight for their cause. The NAACP is setting out to legally free Black people from oppression, and the N.U.L is combating everyday life during the rise of industrialization during the 20th century. The ideas that came about during this age and the science of pride are still present in the modern fight for Black people.

### **Black Lives Matter Comparison**

Black Lives Matter activists employ similar strategies to their counterparts in the early 20th century. For example, as in all Black activists' movements, the way word spreads is through the media. Although the early 20th century activists did not have Twitter, early activists used newsletters such as *The Crisis* from the NAACP. The spread of information is essential to every movement, and a section of Black activism has found a way to spread its message.

There is also a cultural movement within this modern movement similar to the Harlem Renaissance. Artists in the Harlem Renaissance employed different types of fine art, like paintings, music, plays, and photography, to show that they were just as sophisticated as their counterparts. The same can be said for artists during this era. Several memorable pieces of fine art have come from this movement that has pushed for justice for the Black community. For example, the photo of Edward Crawford throwing a tear gas container back to police officers

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<sup>150</sup> Judith Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey: Race and Class in Modern Society*. (United Kingdom: L.S.U., 1985), 106.

won the Pulitzer Prize in 2015.<sup>151</sup> That image alone has evoked so many emotions from people as it circulated the globe.

Musical artists during the Harlem Renaissance also used jazz to express themselves. The likes of Duke Ellington and Fats Waller changed the world with their jazz compositions. Comparatively, artists such as Kendrick Lamar and Anderson Paak created anthems or rallying cries for the modern-day movement. Business Insider states, "Alright," Lamar channels the struggles of the modern Black experience in America while also recognizing hundreds of years of work that led to this point. It is an anthem of positivity written amidst a backdrop of civil unrest."<sup>152</sup> Kendrick Lamar's record "Alright" speaks on what it is like for Black Americans in Modern America.

Several movies have been released in the way of plays or theatrical performances that have displayed the modern Black experience. For example, *The Hate U Give* captured the protagonist switching between her poor Black home life and her rich White school until she witnesses her childhood friend gunned down by a police officer.

## **Conclusion**

The fight for Black lives has been an ongoing struggling since the beginning of slavery. First was the abolitionist movement, where enslaved Africans and liberal Americans fought for their freedom, ending with the Civil war in 1865. The early 20th century saw various forms of racism towards African Americans, with thousands murdered and mobs of White people destroying African American homes and businesses. In Locke's work, *New Negro* Walter White states, "The constant hammering of three hundred years of oppression has resulted in a race

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<sup>151</sup> Mary Emily O'Hara, "Ferguson Protester Edward Crawford, Subject of Iconic Photo, Found Dead," *NBC*. 2017

<sup>152</sup> Ben Gilbert, "Kendrick Lamar's civil rights anthem 'Alright' almost didn't happen," *Business Insider*. 25 October, 2016.

consciousness among the Negroes of the United States which is amazing to those who know how powerful it is."<sup>153</sup> Modern racial reform movements are based on the steps that were taken prior taken by those who came before. After the civil war, the Reconstruction Era, people of African descent saw some improvement in their lives but afterward saw that improvement taken away by racial discrimination. The late 1800s saw the rise of groups tailored to improve the lives of African Americans. The steps taken in the late 1800s paved the way for the interracial organizations that came to be during the early 1900s.

Revolutionaries forged interracial organizations for the betterment of African Americans in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The creation of the NAACP, the National Urban League, and the UNIA to help propel African American lives forward. The early 1900s were also when African Americans were framed themselves in a new light during the Harlem Renaissance. However, some might argue that the Harlem Renaissance was filtered through a European lens and not wholly an African American phenomenon. The great migration contributed to the Harlem Renaissance. It was a revival of African American culture in the arts and politics. During the great migration and the creation of the Harlem renaissance, new forms of Black music came to be, such as blues and jazz. There were also Black theaters for this new was played, contemporary plays, and other art forms. Black Americans during the 1920s changed the popular culture in America with their expression of art, especially jazz. With the underlying Renaissance movement, Black people could change how many looked at them, show their worth, and be themselves after 300 years of enslavement and oppression. The Renaissance movement was also the bedrock for future trends such as the civil rights movement. Many leaders during that time were outspoken, as mentioned in this work, like Marcus Garvey and Dubois, and provided a change in Black people across the

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<sup>153</sup> Alain Locke and Robert C. Hayden, *The New Negro*, (New York: Atheneum, 1968), 366.

globe. This new sense of self-determination and pride provided a new commitment to political activism and social change that would continue.

In comparison, the strategies and tactics used by the NAACP, UNIA, artists in the Harlem renaissance, and N.U.L are similar to the techniques used by Black Lives Matter activists. For example, artists' methods to debunk racial stereotypes and express themselves in the environment are the same as Black Lives Matter activists' use of songs, movies, and photography to spread awareness and expose their environments. The NAACP primarily focuses on legal action to help the Black community free themselves from oppression. Black Lives Matter activists are similar to the NAACP in their defund the police initiative. The significant difference between early 20<sup>th</sup> century activists and the Black Lives Matter activist is that later activists have a decentralized structure. In contrast, the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century activists had a centralized system with a main leader and someone to rally behind. Black Lives Matter activists use similar tactics and strategies of early 20<sup>th</sup> century activists further emphasizing that the current civil rights movements theoretically come from earlier movements.

## Chapter 3

### Civil Rights Movement and Black Lives Matter Strategies

#### Introduction

The 1960s were, as Charles Dickens states in *A Tale of Two Cities*, the best of times and worst of times.<sup>154</sup> Children gained more freedom around the time televisions entered the homes of many Americans. The invention of birth control and one of the most significant music celebrations of American history, Woodstock, were all a part of the 1960s atmosphere. During the 1960s, the United States was also at war with Vietnam and poverty, both of which were losing battles. Nevertheless, the 1960s were a time of change, as Sam Cooke describes in his 1964 song "A Change is Gonna Come." The civil rights movement was a part of that meaningful change of the 1960s. Black people continued pursuing freedom in a country that treated them as second-class citizens.

Years of African Americans fighting against racial discrimination and equal rights preceded the civil rights movement. The previous chapter discussed the rise of several groups, such as the NAACP, UNIA, The National Urban League, and others; these groups looked to end racial discrimination and help African Americans prosper as free people. Unfortunately, this fight came to a slowed down due to the Great Depression. The struggle continued in the 1940s when President Truman called for segregation in the armed forces, which sparked the civil rights movement. Another event that helped fan the smoldering spark was the *Brown v. Board of Education* case. The Supreme Court ruled to end segregation in public schools, but states

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<sup>154</sup> Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*, (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co 1942.)

continued to allow segregation in public schools, mainly in the South. The two events that stoked the smoldering fire of justice into the Civil Rights Movement were the death of Emmett Till and the refusal of Rosa Parks to give up her bus seat in 1955. This chapter will analyze the Civil Rights Movement, beginning with Emmett Till and Rosa Parks. Then this chapter look at the encompassing strategy of nonviolent direct action and tactics used by the Sothern Christian Leadership Organization, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Congress of Racial Equality, and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. These groups used tactics such as, sit-ins, marches, boycotts and freedom rides, overall being civilly disobedient to fight against racism and to advocate for change in the 1960s.

### **The Death of Emmett Till**

Emmett Till, a 14-year-old boy from Chicago, was brutally murdered while visiting his family in Mississippi. The store owner, Carolyn Bryant, accused Till of flirting with her at the local convenience store during his travels to Money, Mississippi. Roy Bryant and J.W. Milam, husband and brother respectively to Carolyn Bryant, were told of the interaction between Till and Carolyn a few days later after they returned from a business trip. The two men were furious when they found out that Till broke an unwritten rule of the South. They went to see Till at his uncle's, Mose Wright, home. Till was taken from his uncle's house by the two men. The two men brutally beat Till, tied him to a cotton gin fan with barbed wire, and threw him into the Tallahatchie River; police later recovered a body. He was so brutally disfigured; authorities and family members could not recognize. Mose Wright states, "According to his testimony, he only knew for sure that he was looking at his nephew's remains because he recognized the ring that

Emmett had inherited from his father."<sup>155</sup> Till's body at first glance. "According to his mother's description, his tongue had been choked out of his mouth and left hanging onto his chin. His right eyeball was resting on his cheek. Only two of his teeth remained in his mouth, and the bridge of his nose had been broken. His right ear had been cut almost in half, and one of his murderers had taken a hatchet and cut through the top of his head from ear to ear. He had also been shot through the head."<sup>156</sup>

The police in Money, Mississippi, wanted to bury the body quickly, but Till's mother wanted to expose what they had done to her boy and decided on an open casket funeral. *Jet*, a weekly magazine, published a picture of Till's body, and, from there, the media erupted. Till's mother later buried him, and the two, Bryant and Milam, went to trial in Sumner, Mississippi. Mose Wright positively identified the men as the people who took Till and killed him during the trial; however, an all-white jury found them not guilty. People all over the country were furious over the court's decision and their decision not to charge them for kidnapping. In particular, this case showed just how terrible living under the Jim Crow Segregation laws could be. This case also shows the strategy that Till's mother employed. She used the media to spread the information of her child's murder to show the public what happened which in turn galvanized the public to make a change.

### **Rosa Parks**

Rosa Parks broke the segregated bus rule written into law in Montgomery, Alabama; therefore, she also helped jump-start the Civil Rights Movement known today with her defiance. On December 1<sup>st</sup>, Parks was on her way home from work, and she sat in the first available seat

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<sup>155</sup> Valerie Smith, "Emmett Till's Ring," *Women's Studies Quarterly* 36, no. 1/2 (2008), 155.

<sup>156</sup> Smith, "Emmett Till's Ring", 152.

behind the white-only section. Shortly after, as King describes, “Blake [the bus operator] told the four Black passengers sitting in the row immediately behind the white division to leave their seats and go to the back of the bus.”<sup>157</sup> Three got up, and one stayed; Rosa Parks refused to leave to her seat. Two police officers eventually escorted her off the bus and into custody. News of Parks’s defiance and arrest spread throughout the city. E.D. Nixon, a civil rights organizer, bailed her out and awaited her release from jail. He would continue to play an integral part in what was to come. Nixon discussed with Parks, her mother, and her husband the possibility of being a plaintiff in the case. They came up with the idea for the Black population to boycott the Montgomery bus system until the trial was over. The initiation of the boycott would be the first act of the Civil Rights movement to push back against segregationist laws.

Leading up to Parks’s trial, the Black community boycotted the Montgomery bus system and refused to ride. Finally, on December 5<sup>th</sup>, Parks was found guilty and fined for breaking segregationist laws. At that point, the boycott was more popular than the four thought initially. Nixon decided to take advantage of the popularity and formed the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) and elected Reverend Martin Luther King, a newcomer to Montgomery, to the organization's president.

### **Montgomery Bus Boycott**

The Montgomery bus boycott lasted for over a year, with many people walking. The MIA set up a system for people to catch rides to and from work; those who worked as housekeepers sometimes obtained rides from their employer. The bus boycott caused Montgomery's revenue to fall because African Americans primarily rode the bus. The boycott became news as national

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<sup>157</sup> Robert Aitken, "Rosa Parks: An American Icon," *Litigation* 29, no. 2 (2003), 48.

television, newspapers, and magazines began to spread what was happening. At first, the boycott leaders only wanted fair treatment, fair employment, black bus drivers, and fair seating arrangements, but Montgomery refused. After the refusal, MIA leaders decided to ask for desegregation of the bus system. On June 5th, 1956, the federal district court decided that segregated seating on buses violated the 14th amendment<sup>158</sup>; as a result, on December 21st, 1956, Montgomery upheld the Supreme Court's decision and integrated buses, ending the boycott.<sup>159</sup> The bus boycott was one of the earliest mass protests, and it helped set the groundwork for what was to come in the civil rights movement. Although their efforts to integrate were successful, violence still erupted with the decision. Snipers shot at buses, and in 1957 Black churches and the homes of prominent leaders, including Martin Luther King Jr home were bombed. Martin Luther King Jr. played a significant role in the Montgomery bus boycott, and that role propelled him into the public eye as the leader of the civil rights movement. His use of nonviolence, and civil disobedience became hallmarks of the civil rights campaign.

### **Southern Christian Leadership Conference**

In 1957, several Black Christian leaders came together to form the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). The SCLC included Martin Luther King Jr, Ralph Abernathy, Fred Shuttlesworth, and 60 other ministers. These leaders put together this group to help organize mass movements similar to the scale of the Montgomery Bus Boycott. This was the beginning of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. The SCLC's primary strategy was to use nonviolent action to persuade the American people to the side of civil rights, much like the

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<sup>158</sup> Robert Jerome Glennon, "The Role of Law in the Civil Rights Movement: The Montgomery Bus Boycott, 1955-1957," *Law and History Review* 9, no. 1 (1991), 80.

<sup>159</sup> Glennon, "The Role of Law ...", 86-87.

old tactic of moral suasion used during the abolitionist movement. On January 11th, 1957, the SCLC had a press conference at which they said, "We advocate nonviolence in words, thought and deed, we believe this spirit and this spirit alone can overcome the decades of mutual fear and suspicion that have infested and poisoned our Southern culture."<sup>160</sup> The press conference was even telegraphed to President Eisenhower and Vice President Nixon. The SCLC was different from other organizations of the time because it ran as an umbrella organization and worked with other organizations and churches during the civil rights movement. Civil rights activists also used the tactic of educating the population.

Septima Clark and a former student, Esau Jenkins thought of the idea to create a program to educate the Black community. They came from a Tennessee High Lander Folk school where Clark began teaching adult literacy classes.<sup>161</sup> The High Lander Folk School first funded the Citizenship Education Program but was later transferred to the SCLC. "Although the SCLC would be less financially harassed than previously when it accepted the transfer of the CEP in the summer of 1961, it was never in a position to spend over four years developing a project as Highlander did in the case of the CEP."<sup>162</sup> The SCLC used the CEP to educate the Black community. "The Southern Christian Leadership Conference Citizenship program is designed to acquaint citizens with how our government is run and to help them meet voting requirements"<sup>163</sup> because the citizenship schools were critical in preparing Black people to vote and take care of

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<sup>160</sup> Southern Leaders Conference, "A Statement to the South and Nation," Issued by the Southern Negro Leaders Conference on Transportation and Nonviolent Integration, 11 January 1957.

<sup>161</sup> David P. Levine, "The Birth of the Citizenship Schools: Entwining the Struggles for Literacy and Freedom." *History of Education Quarterly* 44, no. 3 (2004), 391.

<sup>162</sup> Peter Ling, "Local Leadership in the Early Civil Rights Movement: The South Carolina Citizenship Education Program of the Highlander Folk School," *Journal of American Studies* 29, no. 3 (1995), 402.

<sup>163</sup> Congress of Racial Equality, "Mississippi Fourth Congressional District," *Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Citizenship Workbook*, 1965, 1.

their community. The use of the CEP was most prominently seen in Mississippi. "Between 1961 and 1965, community leaders, primarily Black women, responded to the SCLC's invitation and taught CEP classes in the Mississippi Delta and across the South, blending historical traditions of Black women's leadership in education and emerging theories of participatory democracy to build grassroots support for civil rights activists."<sup>164</sup>

### **Little Rock Nine**

In the traditional timeline of the civil rights movement, the event of the Little Rock Nine attending Central High School is next, and this is also where the advocacy of the NAACP for change. The Little Rock Nine was composed of nine Black students who enrolled in Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, in September of 1957. The attendance of Little Rock was an experiment to evaluate the ruling of *Brown v Board of Education*, the ruling that ended segregation in public schools. On the first day of school, September 4th, 1957, Daisy Bates, president of the NAACP's Arkansas chapter, carpooled eight of the nine Black students to Central Highschool. The Arkansas National Guard, whom Governor Orval Faubus summoned, blocked the Black students from entering upon arrival. A picture of Elizabeth Eckford was produced that will live in the infamy as a little girl holding her notebook as she walked to the steps of campus surrounded by a hostile crowd of white students and adults. The event drew national attention.

On September 24<sup>th</sup>, President Eisenhower addressed the nation and the violent outburst to the nine Black students looking to integrate. He stated, "We are portrayed as a violator of those standards of conduct which the peoples of the world united in proclaiming in the Charter of the

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<sup>164</sup> Deanna M. Gillespie, "'First-Class' Citizenship Education in the Mississippi Delta, 1961–1965," *The Journal of Southern History* 80, no. 1 (2014), 110.

United Nations. There they affirmed 'faith in fundamental human rights and the dignity and worth of the human person, and they did so 'without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion."<sup>165</sup> Eisenhower enforced desegregation by deploying federal troops to Arkansas and federalizing the Arkansas National Guard to enforce the federal court ruling. The Little Rock Nine had their first full day of class the following day. Although the students were in school and protected to some degree by the troops stationed there, they could not always be protected. The students faced harassment; Minnijean Brown was even expelled for retaliating against the violence; in 1958, Gloria Ray was pushed down a flight of stairs.<sup>166</sup> On May 25th, Earnest Green, the only senior within the Little Rock Nine, graduated from Central High School in the first integrated commencement without any violence. Earnest Green was also the first African American to graduate high school in the United States. Before the beginning of the next school year, Governor Faubus closed the public schools. "He acted after the Supreme Court had refused to permit a delay in integration at Central High School. The governor said that the closing was necessary to prevent "impending violence and disorder."<sup>167</sup> As the governor signed the law, he was sued. "Moments after the Governor signed the proclamation, Sheriff Tom Gulley of Pulaski (Little Rock) County served him with a petition for a declaratory judgment on the school closing law."<sup>168</sup> Because the governor's new proclamation and suit filed against him, Arkansas needed a special vote for the people to decide if the schools were to be opened. "It also provides that a special election will be held in the school district October 7th to decide whether the schools should be reopened on an integrated basis. Most of all qualified voters, almost twice the number

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<sup>165</sup> President Eisenhower Speech on Little Rock. C-span.org.

<sup>166</sup> Little Rock Central High School, Crisis Timeline.

<sup>167</sup> Claude Sitton, "Court Bars Little Rock Delay; President Calls for Support; Faubus Orders 4 Schools Shut Down," *New York Times*, 13 September 1958.

<sup>168</sup> Sitton, "Court Bars Little Rock Delay."

that usually turns out for an election in Arkansas will be required for such action."<sup>169</sup> The Supreme Court eventually turned over Governor Faubus's proclamation. In short," the court said, "the Constitutional rights of children not to be discriminated against in school admission on the grounds of race or color can neither be nullified openly and directly by state legislators or state executive or judicial officers nor nullified indirectly by them through evasive schemes for segregation whether attempted "ingeniously or ingenuously. "<sup>170</sup> The Governor of Little Rock, Arkansas reopened schools for the 1959 school year, and they were integrated. Amid the Little Rock Nine event, President Eisenhower passed the Civil Rights Act of 1957 on September 9th. "The new Act established the Civil Rights Section of the Justice Department and empowered federal prosecutors to obtain court injunctions against interference with the right to vote. It also established a federal Civil Rights Commission to investigate discriminatory conditions and recommend corrective measures. Congress weakened the final Act due to lack of support among the Democrats."<sup>171</sup> This Act was the first piece of legislation since the Reconstruction era that supported the civil rights of African Americans.

### SNCC

At the beginning of the 1960s, a new group emerged that continued to use King's tactics of nonviolence and civil disobedience to gain the nation's attention: the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). In February of 1960, a group of students in Greensboro, North Carolina, sat at the whites-only lunch counter of Woolworth. The four Greensboro students, Ezell Blair Jr., David Richmond, Franklin McCain, and Joseph McNeil, sat at the counter and

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<sup>169</sup> Sitton, "Court Bars Little Rock Delay."

<sup>170</sup> Sitton, "Court Bars Little Rock Delay."

<sup>171</sup> Civil Rights Act of 1957.

were not served. Store employees soon called the police; however, the four students had already alerted the media. The police could not escort them out because the students did not provoke, and they were paying customers. The four students stayed at the lunch counter until the store closed. They also came the next day but with more students. The Greensboro sit-ins sparked similar nonviolent actions across the nation. The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee was formed in April of 1960 to make the most of the energy that the sit-ins were garnering, and it was created to provide younger people with a voice in the civil rights movement. The organization's involvement in the campaign was paramount as they continued to organize sit-ins across the nation and provide young people with a voice. The movement spread and the news coverage on sit-ins brought segregation to the forefront of the nation's attention. In response to the sit-in campaign, eating facilities became integrated by the end of the summer. Not long after civil rights activists employed similar tactics with the Freedom Rides.

### **Freedom Rides**

The Freedom Riders looked to assess the *Boynton v Virginia* decision of 1960 that found that interstate transportation facilities and terminals were unconstitutional. The Freedom Riders modeled their 1960s effort after the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) freedom rides in 1947. CORE was founded in Chicago in 1942 as a primarily white organization based on Christian pacifism and mainly consisted of college students. Due to their pacifism, CORE was established two principles by which it would stand for two decades: "Gandhian nonviolence and interracial action."<sup>172</sup> CORE primarily operated in the north until the 1960s, when they participated in sit-ins; from there, they moved south, participating in Freedom Rides modeled after the first set of

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<sup>172</sup> August Meier and Elliott M. Rudwick, *CORE: A Study in the Civil Rights Movement, 1942-1968*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 9.

freedom rides, they created. The 1947 freedom rides challenged the 1946 supreme court decision *Morgan v Virginia* that segregated bus seating was unconstitutional. In both freedom rides, they traveled to the South and made an effort to use white-only bathrooms and other facilities.

Thirteen people, seven African Americans and six whites, participated in the Freedom Rides of the 1960s. On May 4th, 1961 they left Washington D.C. On May 12th, when they reached Rock Hill, South Carolina, three of the freedom riders were attacked as they tried to use the white-only bathroom; John Lewis was one of the three attacked. John Lewis was a member of SNCC and a seminary student at the time. As the freedom rides continued, they split into two groups in Atlanta, Georgia. The Greyhound arrived first on May 14th in Alabama, Mother's Day. The bus was then surrounded by an angry white mob with hostile intent, causing the bus to continue past the station; the Greyhound was followed by the band in cars and had its tires blown, forcing the bus to stop. Once the bus stopped, a member of the angry mob threw a firebomb into the bus causing the Freedom Riders to escape the bus before it burst into flames, and they were beat by the hostile mob. Civil rights activists used the media, spreading images of the burning bus and brutal beating to reach the nation. The civil rights activists continued to garner the support of the nation through their nonviolent actions, rallying them to their cause.

The Freedom Riders on the other bus were met with the same fate in Birmingham, Alabama. Bull Connor, the Commissioner of Public Safety in Birmingham, was tipped off that the Freedom Riders would come through Alabama. "Bull Connor called the Imperial Wizard of the Alabama Ku Klux Klan and guaranteed them fifteen minutes alone with the Freedom Riders

with no police."<sup>173</sup> After the attacks, the bus system refused to take the freedom riders any further, and core members of the freedom ride campaign were flown home. Members of the Tennessee SNCC branch thought the freedom rides should continue. SNCC member Diane Nash was insistent that the movement continue. If they stop us with violence, the movement is dead. We're coming; we just want to know if you can meet us.<sup>174</sup> Nash felt if the movement was stopped by violence, every time an uprising happened, violence would continue to stop it; therefore, Nash led ten students from Tennessee to Birmingham to continue the freedom rides.

U.S. Attorney General Robert Kennedy began negotiations with Governor John Patterson of Alabama to protect the freedom riders and started negotiations with the bus companies to secure a driver for the freedom riders. Finally, on May 20th, the freedom rides continued with a police escort; unfortunately, "...the riders' police car and helicopter escort disappeared once the bus entered the Montgomery city limits."<sup>175</sup> The freedom riders arrived at the Montgomery bus station, the mob soon appeared, attacking them as they departed from the bus. On May 21, 1961, Robert Kennedy sent federal marshals to Montgomery to quell the violence. The next night Martin Luther King Jr. spoke at the First Baptist Church with over one thousand supporters of the freedom rides; a mob soon formed, and a riot broke out. Reverend King called Robert Kennedy to ask for protection against the mob, and Kennedy called upon the federal marshals to protect the churchgoers against the rioters. The marshals used tear gas as a method to disperse

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<sup>173</sup> Raymond Arsenault, "We Were Prepared to Die: Freedom Riders." Civil Rights Museum. Oxford University Press, 2007.

<sup>174</sup> Belinda Robnett, "African American Women in the Civil Rights Movement, 1954-1965: Gender, Leadership, and Micromobilization," *American Journal of Sociology* 101, no. 6 (1996), 1685-1686.

<sup>175</sup> Kenneth O'Reilly, "The FBI and the Civil Rights Movement during the Kennedy Years--from the Freedom Rides to Albany," *The Journal of Southern History* 54, no. 2 (1988), 213.

the white mob. Governor Patterson also responded by sending in the Alabama national guard and invoking martial law to restore order to the state.

The freedom rides continued on May 24th as they departed from Montgomery, Alabama to Jackson, Mississippi. The Riders were met with supporters in Jackson, but those who tried to use a whites-only facilities were arrested for trespassing and taken to Parchman Penitentiary. While in Parchman, the freedom riders were treated poorly. "They were sent off to chain gangs, beaten by prison guards, and were forced to live under extremely inhumane conditions. Some freedom riders would be placed in cells only a few feet away from the execution chamber on death row."<sup>176</sup> The point of this tactic was to break the freedom riders' spirit. Nevertheless, the freedom rides persisted and grew even more with the increasing attention gained due to the media. Finally, through the freedom ride tactic, the Interstate Commerce Commission prohibited segregation in interstate transit terminals in the fall of 1961, under severe pressure from Kennedy.

### **Vivian Malone and James Hood**

Another instance in which the NAACP continued to challenge segregationist laws was in 1963. George C. Wallace blocked two Black students from registering at the University of Alabama; on June 11th, Wallace stood in the doorway of Alabama University's Foster Auditorium. He did so with the symbolic intent to block two Black students, Vivian Malone and James Hood, from enrolling in school. Malone and Hood joined the NAACP federal lawsuit to desegregate schools and universities.<sup>177</sup> Wallace was looking to keep his inaugural promise,

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<sup>176</sup> Arsenault, "We Were Prepared to Die: Freedom Riders."

<sup>177</sup> Clark E. Culpepper Clark, *The Schoolhouse Door: Segregation's Last Stand at the University of Alabama E. Culpepper Clark*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 177.

“...segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever.”<sup>178</sup> Wallace would keep them from registering until President Kennedy federalized Alabama's National Guard, and he eventually stepped aside. This firmly placed President Kennedy on the side of the civil rights movement, and the coverage of Wallace's attempt to keep segregation in Alabama put him in the national spotlight. The NAACP's tactic of litigation for desegregation in schools and universities proved to continue working in the fight civil rights. Before Kennedy's speech to fully support the civil rights movement, a member of the NAACP was shot and killed in his driveway.

### **Medgar Evers**

Medgar Evers was the first field agent for the NAACP in Mississippi. Evers had established a name for himself in the community with voter registration drives, working on cases, and leading protests against segregation. Evers had even begun a campaign to boycott stores in downtown Jackson, Mississippi. He boycotted these stores because they discriminated against Black people. Medgar Evers states the following in a speech to the members of Jackson, Mississippi.

"Don't shop for anything on Capitol Street. Let's let the merchants down on Capitol Street feel the economic pinch. Let me say this to you. I had one merchant call me, and he said, "I want you to know that I've talked to my national office today, and they want me to tell you that we don't need nigger business." These are stores that help support the white Citizens Council, the council dedicated to keeping you and I second class citizens...Now finally, people, we'll be demonstrating here until freedom comes to Negroes here in Jackson, Mississippi."<sup>179</sup>

On June 12th, 1963, Evers was coming home late when he stepped out of his car, carrying a Jim Crow Must Go T-shirt<sup>180</sup>, was and immediately he was shot. "Medgar Evers had

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<sup>178</sup> Culpepper, *The Schoolhouse Door*, 168.

<sup>179</sup> Medgar Evers, "The Civil Rights Act of 1964: A Long Struggle for Freedom Medgar Evers and the Jackson Movement: "Until Freedom Comes," *The American Revolution of '63*, NBC News, 2 September 1963. News Broadcast. 2:48.

<sup>180</sup> NAACP. "Medgar Evers," *NAACP*.

been shot in the back by a single round from a high-powered rifle. The one fingerprint found on the weapon belonged to Byron de la Beckwith, a member of the Citizens Council in Greenwood, Mississippi. Medgar Evers, 37 years old, died half-hour later."<sup>181</sup> The assassination of Medgar Evers brought national attention to Mississippi. Evers's tactics in life proved to be instrumental in fighting for civil rights in Mississippi and his death proved pivotal in the long standing for equal rights.

### **The March on Washington**

Almost two months later, in August of 1963, one of the largest mass marches of the civil rights movement came into existence. On August 28th, an estimated 250,000 people went to the Lincoln Memorial, now known as the March on Washington. Marches were an instrumental part of nonviolent direct action that civil rights activists primarily employed. Many organizations, including the SCLC, SNCC CORE, and the NAACP, put together the demonstration to bring light on the continued inequalities that African Americans faced.

For this March on Washington, Randolph and King held firm when Kennedy called upon them to speak about the March on Washington, believing that violence and disorder would occur during the march.<sup>182</sup> King, Randolph, and other leaders of the demonstrations insisted that the march go on, it did. However, they did compromise to stop at the Lincoln Memorial instead of going to the Capitol to keep Congress from feeling as though they were about to endure an attack. JFK ultimately supported the march and had his brother work with the organizers to ensure the best security. The March on Washington proceeded with no violence. The March on

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<sup>181</sup> Karen Grigsby Bates, "Trials & Transformation: Myrlie Evers' 30-Year Fight to Convict Medgar's Accused Killer," *Emerge*, February 1994, 35.

<sup>182</sup> JFK Library, A conversation with John Lewis.

Washington needed to happen without any violence so the activists could portray themselves as dignified and respectful. Randolph curated a list of several people to speak at the event, including John Lewis, a member of SNCC, and Martin Luther King Jr. Before Lewis's speech, he was asked to change it the day of the March because it was too radical and criticized the federal government. In a portion of his original speech, he stated, "The revolution is a serious one. Mr. Kennedy is trying to take the revolution out of the streets and put it into the courts. Listen, Mr. Kennedy. Listen, Mr. Congressman. Listen, fellow citizens. The black masses are on the march for jobs and freedom, and we must say to the politicians that there won't be a "cooling-off" period."<sup>183</sup> Lewis's speech was still considered radical even after his revision; his comment towards the cooling-off period directly calls out Robert F. Kennedy's remarks towards the hostility that the freedom riders faced in Alabama and Mississippi. Martin Luther King was last to give his most historic speech.

King's "I Have a Dream" speech was a powerful speech and partially impromptu. In the crowd, gospel singer Mahalia Jackson yelled, "Tell them about the dream Martin!" It was then that MLK pushed his written paper to the side and stated, "And so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream...."<sup>184</sup> He began his freestyle, giving a completely off-the-cuff speech to the 250000 plus people that were gathered at the Lincoln Memorial, a speech that King did not intend, and a speech that will forever remain in the minds of Americans.

The March on Washington spurred Lyndon B. Johnson to sign the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Kennedy introduced the act while in office, and it transcended his tenure in office and his

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<sup>183</sup> John Lewis, March on Washington Speech, 28 August 1963.

<sup>184</sup> Martin King Jr, I Have A Dream, 28 August 1963.

untimely assassination into the Johnson administration. This Act states, "To enforce the constitutional right to vote, to confer jurisdiction upon the district courts of the United States to provide injunctive relief against discrimination in public accommodations, to authorize the Attorney General to institute suits to protect constitutional rights in public facilities and public education, to extend the Commission on Civil Rights, to prevent discrimination in federally assisted programs, to establish a Commission on Equal Employment Opportunity, and for other purposes."<sup>185</sup> This Act prohibited discrimination in employment and public places and provided schools and public facilities integration. This Act also enforced the constitutional right to vote in any election. Before President Johnson signed the Act on July 2nd of 1964, on September 15th, almost a month after the March on Washington and two months before the assassination of Kennedy, a bomb was detonated at the 16<sup>th</sup> street Baptist church in Birmingham, Alabama. This explosion killed four little girls and incited an angry protest in the streets of Birmingham.<sup>186</sup>

### **Freedom Summer and the Freedom Democratic Party**

The violence did not stop with the murder of the four girls at the 16<sup>th</sup> street Baptist church. During the summer of 1964, dubbed Freedom Summer, members of SNCC and CORE came together to go throughout Mississippi to obtain voters, essentially a statewide voter registration drive, and to teach in impoverished areas. Cleveland Sellers details the brutal racism and violence he experienced while volunteering during Freedom Summer in Mississippi, describing it as the longest nightmare.<sup>187</sup> The Freedom Summer went into Mississippi with a few goals in mind, "to establish Freedom Schools and community centers throughout the state, to

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<sup>185</sup> Civil Rights Act of 1964.

<sup>186</sup> 16th Street Baptist Church Bombing (1963), National Parks Services.

<sup>187</sup> Cleveland Sellers and Robert L. Terrell, *The River of No Return; the Autobiography of a Black Militant and the Life and Death of SNCC*, (New York: William Morrow & Company, 1973), 94.

increase black voter registration, and to challenge the all-white delegation that would represent the state at the Democratic National Convention in August."<sup>188</sup> The volunteers prepared themselves to enter Mississippi knowing that the press and politicians of the state called their actions an "invasion"<sup>189</sup> on what Governor Paul B. Johnson states as "the last stronghold of individual liberty."<sup>190</sup> On June 21st, the initial surge of volunteers went to Mississippi.

Among the first wave of recruits were Andrew Goodman, James Chaney, and Michael Schwerner. The three young men went to investigate a church that was burned down as the site of a civil rights meeting. The three civil rights workers were arrested and held on suspicion for the Mt. Zion church fire,<sup>191</sup> but law enforcement released them later that night. The disappearance of the three civil rights workers caught national attention, with CBS-TV stating that it is "the focus of the whole country's concern."<sup>192</sup> The FBI searched for the bodies for 44 days, until they received information from an anonymous source. "Based on a well-remunerated tip, on Tuesday, August 5, the FBI found the bodies of James Earl Chaney, Michael Schwerner, and Andrew Goodman buried in an earthen dam on private property a few miles from where they had disappeared."<sup>193</sup> By then, Freedom Summer was fully underway. "'Mississippi Summer Project Running Summary of Incidents' (1964) lists several assault victims who found themselves arrested, usually for breach of the peace; and generally, the numerous incidents of the Running Summary depict, like pointillist dots on a Seurat canvas, the resentful and simmering

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<sup>188</sup> Freedom Summer, Sncc digital.org.

<sup>189</sup> John R. Rachal, "'The Long, Hot Summer': The Mississippi Response to Freedom Summer, 1964," *The Journal of Negro History* 84, no. 4 (1999), 316.

<sup>190</sup> Rachal, "'The Long, Hot Summer'", 316.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*, 322.

<sup>192</sup> Howard Ball, *Murder in Mississippi: United States v. Price and the Struggle for Civil Rights*, (Lawrence, Kan.: University Press of Kansas, 2004), 64.

<sup>193</sup> Rachal, "'The Long, Hot Summer'", 330.

atmosphere in which volunteer and staff workers conducted voter registration and education."<sup>194</sup> The Freedom Summer volunteers worked in conditions that this incident, along with others, illustrates.

The volunteers of Freedom Summer built schools to help bring the Black citizens of Mississippi to the level of literacy needed to gain the right the vote. "Midway through the summer, the project's emphasis shifted from voter registration towards challenging the Mississippi Democrat's all-white delegation. Local people began attempting—without success—to attend delegate selection meetings."<sup>195</sup> Freedom Summer did not succeed in registering large numbers of voters, it did bring awareness to the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party.

The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party was founded in April of 1964, and it looked to challenge the regular state party and the national party convention. The MFDP gained traction during Freedom Summer when hundreds of volunteers came to Mississippi to hold a summer-long voter registration drive. With the help of the volunteers, the MFDP was able to build up its members and have a state convention parallel to the one that was already in the works. The MFDP elected delegates to go to the Democratic Convention in Atlantic City. "The 68-person MFDP delegation included a wide variety of homegrown activists known for their determination and militancy in the face of harsh racial oppression. They included E.W. Steptoe, Fannie Lou Hamer, Victoria Gray, Annie Devine, Hartman Turnbow, and Hazel Palmer, among others."<sup>196</sup> The MFDP and its elected officials arrived in Atlantic City, New Jersey, challenged the regular Democratic Mississippi Party, and went before the credentials committee. It was here that Fannie

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<sup>194</sup> Ibid.,322.

<sup>195</sup> Freedom Summer, Snccdigital.org.

<sup>196</sup> Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, Snccdigital.org.

Lou Hammer gave a riveting speech. In part of her speech, she stated, "Is this America? The land of the free and the home of the brave, where we have to sleep with our telephones off of their hooks because our lives are threatened daily because we want to live as decent human beings in America?"<sup>197</sup> Her speech questioned the blatant racism that the African Americans in the South faced, President Johnson abruptly cut off Hammer's televised speech with an improvised press conference. The MFDP was later offered a compromise, where they would get two seats on the regular Democratic party. Although, The MFDP rejected the compromise and left. Fannie Lou Hammer famously states, "we didn't come all this way for no two seats."<sup>198</sup> Although the MFDP did not become the new party for Mississippi, they did succeed in publicizing the injustices and discrimination that African Americans faced in Mississippi due to the white power structure. The pressure the MFDP applied eventually helped the Voting Rights Act of 1964 pass into law.

### **Bloody Sunday**

The bloodshed continued in 1965 into what is now known as Bloody Sunday. SNCC fought to get rid of Jim Crow's stranglehold on Alabama, especially Selma. For months after President Johnson passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, John Lewis, Chairman of SNCC, tried to register Black people to vote. Repeatedly, qualified African Americans were beaten back literally and figuratively. On Sunday, March 7th, 1965, Lewis led a group over the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, to register them to vote. As they got over the crest of the bridge, they could see a wall of state troopers waiting at the bottom, waiting for them. As they reached the bottom, Major John Cloud stated, "It would be detrimental to your safety to continue this march... he is

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<sup>197</sup> Fannie Lou Hamer, Maegan Parker Brooks, and Davis W. Houck, *The Speeches of Fannie Lou Hamer to Tell It like It Is*, (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2011), 65.

<sup>198</sup> Hamer, Brooks, and Houck, *The Speeches of Fannie Lou Hamer*, 63.

an unlawful assembly. You have to disperse; you are ordered to disperse. Go home or go to your church. This march will not continue" Hosea Williams was also there to represent the SCLC. Lewis and Williams did not return, and a few moments later, state troopers put on gas masks and began to tear gas the marchers. The troopers began to move on the marchers beating them with sticks; troopers on horseback chased the crowd of marchers, consisting of men, women, and children, over the bridge as they gasped for air.

Additionally, television crews caught the beating of nonviolent men, women, and children as they were beaten back across the bridge. What they captured was broadcast all over the nation, and this local event soon became a national event, galvanizing the nation to take a stand. Demonstrations all over the country occurred in solidarity for the voting rights marchers. King then entered Selma to attempt another march two days later but turned around when King and other protesters reached the mob of state troopers, to the disappointment of SNCC. On March 21, 1965, after the federal court allowed the protest. King and the SCLC and SNCC marched from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, gathering up to 25000 people as they marched to the Capitol steps. Bloody Sunday directly led to President Johnson signing the Voting Rights Act into law on August 6th, 1965.

### **The Assassination of Martin Luther King**

In 1968, Martin Luther King Jr visited Memphis, Tennessee, to aid in a sanitation workers' strike. On April 3rd, King gave a speech at the Mason Temple Church, here he seemed to foreshadow his death. "I've seen the promised land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight that we, as a people, will go to the promised land. And I'm happy tonight. I'm not worried about anything. I'm not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the glory and the

coming of the lord."<sup>199</sup> These were the last words of King's last speech, telling the people that the promised land is something obtainable, and that the African American community will make it to that land. On April 4th, the following day, during the evening, King and his associates were standing outside on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis when a sniper's bullet went through King's neck. King was rushed to the hospital and was pronounced dead an hour later.

When the news of King's death reached the nation, rioting consumed the nation. President Johnson urged the nation to "reject the blind violence that has struck Dr. King."<sup>200</sup> The assassination of King caused Congress to quickly pass the Fair Housing Act as a fitting legacy for King and the work he had accomplished during his life.<sup>201</sup>

### **Comparison to Black Lives Matter Strategies**

The organizations within the Civil Rights movement are like the current Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement; they both operate under an umbrella structure and work with any other organization that shares the same principles. Black Lives Matter activists also use demonstrations such as marches and sit-ins to create a crisis that will ultimately open the door for discussion and change.

One of the leading forces of the Civil Rights movement is the invention of the television. Invented in 1927, the television did not make it into most homes until 1951, and this was in time for the Civil Rights Movement. The activists in the mid-50s and 60s used the media to take their message nationwide. Undoubtedly, the use of media was on the part of the Civil Rights activists

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<sup>199</sup> Martin Luther King Jr., I've Been to the Mountain Top, 3 April 1968.

<sup>200</sup> Lyndon B. Johnson, President Jackson addresses the nation after the death of Martin Luther King Jr. 4 April 1968.

<sup>201</sup> HistoryPod, 11th April 1968: The Fair Housing Act of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 signed by President Johnson. 10.

and the BLM activists. Although BLM activists spread the message of equality a differently, most young adults use social media, particularly Facebook and Twitter, to gain news and spread the news on a global scale rather than a nationwide scale. BLM's use of social media has allowed the organization to reach a broader basis and in turn strengthen itself. The violence of the Civil Rights movements was broadcasts into the living rooms of numerous Americans and the same holds true for the actions of BLM. Instead of broadcasting to televisions, BLM broadcasts directly to smart phones as well as gaining traditional news coverage.

Civil Rights activists of the 1960s and BLM activists also differ in where they operate. During the 60s, the black church served as the cornerstone for the black movement. The antagonist to the Civil Rights activists knew this and bombed the 16<sup>th</sup> street Baptist church. Even after Bloody Sunday, activists essentially converted churches into hospitals to help those hurt by the state troopers during the march. BLM activists gather via the internet, specifically Twitter.

Unlike during the civil rights era, the Black church does not play a pivotal role in the BLM campaign. The involvement of LGBTQ+ parties and the decline of churchgoers, in general, contribute to a decline in the overall participation of the church in the movement. However, the Black church is there to provide the help it once did in the 1960s.

Education and voter mobilization were key strategies of the civil rights movement. This can also be said for BLM activists during the 2020 election. "The 2020 presidential election had the highest voter turnout of the 21st century, with 66.8% of citizens 18 years and older voting in the election"<sup>202</sup> Protest events would often have voter registration booths. For example, in Georgia "The New Georgia Project is among a handful of organizations actively registering

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<sup>202</sup> 2020 Presidential Election Voting and Registration Tables Now Available.

voters in person at protests around the country.”<sup>203</sup> Their actions correlated with the increase in voter turnout as protesters wanted to see change. “About nine of every 10 voters said the protests over police violence were a factor in their voting, with more than three-fourths calling it a major factor.”<sup>204</sup> The Black vote also grew during the 2020 election. “Turnout among Black voters grew to 66 percent in 2020, up from 61 percent in 2016, albeit slightly lower than 2008 and 2012 when Obama was on the ballot.”<sup>205</sup>

### **Conclusion**

The Civil Rights Movement fought for all minorities, specifically African Americans, to gain equality in the United States. They faced constant violence in many forms, from the Ku Klux Klan, Citizens Council, and other groups as a part of the white backlash to civil rights laws and court cases that pushed the civil rights movement forward. As James Hanigan quotes Colin Morris, “To starve people is violence, to rob them of their dignity and self-respect is violence, to deny them their political rights or discriminate against them is violence.”<sup>206</sup> The white population tried to hold on to the status quo using these violent means and elaborate structures against the Black population. Still, organizations such as SCLC, SNCC CORE, and the NAACP on the front lines of the campaign used civil disobedience to shed light on the mistreatment of African Americans and other minorities. These organizations believed that nonviolent direct action was the best way to confront the war on racism. Leaders such as Martin Luther King believed that

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<sup>203</sup> Charlotte Alter, “How Black Lives Matter Could Reshape the 2020 Elections,” *Time*, 17 June 2020.

<sup>204</sup> Sabrina Tavernise and John Eligon, “Voters Say Black Lives Matter Protests Were Important. They Disagree On Why,” *The New York Times*, 10 June 2021.

<sup>205</sup> Scott Clement and Daniela Santamaría, “What we know about the high, broad turnout in the 2020 election,” *Washington Post*, 13 May 2021.

<sup>206</sup> James P. Hanigan, *Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Foundations of Nonviolence*, (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984), 13.

nonviolence was an absolute imperative of human life.<sup>207</sup> This essay brought to light the major and minor events, tactics, and strategies that the civil rights organizations used as means to gain equality. Civil Rights activists used many forms of nonviolent demonstrations and civil disobedience to make a change. There were some groups that began to see things differently. Towards the mid-1960s, groups such as SNCC and CORE began to lean more in the direction of the Black power moniker that Stokely Carmichael and the Black Panther Party brought to national attention. These groups began to reject the nonviolent teachings of Martin and began to protect themselves by any means necessary.

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<sup>207</sup> Hanigan, *the Foundations of Nonviolence*, 18.

## Chapter 4

### The Black Power Movement and Black Lives Matter Strategies

#### Introduction

In the 1960s, race relations were at the forefront of Americans. In 1965, Lyndon Johnson had signed the Voting Rights Act that helped bring Jim Crow closer to an end. Martin Luther King's message of nonviolence began to deteriorate as racial violence continued to grow. As race relations came to a breaking point, Stokely Carmichael changed the trajectory of the black liberation struggle with one phrase, "Black Power." For the African American community, the civil rights campaign was successful but did not change much in their daily lives. The Black Power argued that Black people could define who they were for themselves. Under the banner of Black Power, new organizations gathered across the country, calling for an end to nonviolence as the only tactic for black liberation. The Black Power movement sought to achieve racial pride and economic freedom, leading to self-sufficiency and safety from racial prejudice. James Brown's song "Say It Loud" exhibited the mindset of African Americans in the late at the dawn of Black Power "Say it loud, I'm Black, and I'm proud," was a call for the Black community to love themselves and their blackness, to be proud of who they were and how they were born. There was no group more influential in the Black Power movement than the Black Panther Party.

On the one hand, the media portrayed the Black Panther Party as an anarchist group that wanted to overthrow the government by any means necessary. They wore black leather jackets with black berets and carried guns in their effort to stop police brutality and police the black neighborhood. On the other hand, the Black Panther Party was a for the people by the people. They had community enrichment programs that focused on educating the people on politics the

even fed the people free breakfast. The ideology of the Black Power era would not exist without the precursor Malcolm X whose ideology helped shape the movement. The followers of Malcolm X took on his ideology of defending themselves by any means necessary to achieve their goal of economic and political. To understand the ideologies and strategies of the Black Power era, this section focuses on Malcolm X's life and his philosophies. Along with examining the doctrines of Malcolm X, this chapter will discuss the strategies and tactics used during the Black Power Movement. Lastly, this chapter will look at this era's similarities with Black Lives Matter activists.

### **The Precursor: Malcolm X**

In understanding, Malcolm X one must look at his past. Malcolm Little was born May 19, 1935, in Omaha, Nebraska. His parents Louise Little and Earl Little were members of the UNIA. The Little family eventually moved from Nebraska to Milwaukee and later Lansing, Michigan, due to KKK threats. Earl died when Malcolm was six, leaving him and his six siblings with Louise. After Earl's death, Louise received life insurance payments, but another creditor refused to pay because they claimed that Earl committed suicide. Also, after Earl's death, welfare agents began to visit Louise and her children, eventually splitting the children into different homes and likely causing Louise to have a mental breakdown, putting her into a mental hospital for 24 years. Malcolm attended middle school but dropped out of high school. From the age of 14- 21, Malcolm had a string of jobs in Boston, where he stayed with his half-sister Ella Little Collins. Malcolm moved to Flint for a short time, then to Harlem, New York, and worked for New Haven Railroad. While in New York, Malcolm became a part of Harlem's underworld. He was a pimp; he gambled and engaged in robbery. During the draft for World War II, Malcolm faked mental illness to avoid being deployed. While seeing the psychiatrist, he stated, "I want to get sent down

South. Organize them nigger soldiers, you dig? Steal us some guns and kill us crackers!"<sup>208</sup>

Malcolm would leave and returned Michigan and return to Boston in 1945, where he and a few accomplices robbed wealthy white families.

In 1946, Malcolm was caught picking up a stolen watch and was sent to prison.

Malcolm's attitude while in prison earned him a nickname. "The men in the cellblock had a name for me: "Satan." Because of my antireligious attitude."<sup>209</sup> Malcolm met a man named Bimbi while in prison. Malcolm described him as "the first man I had ever seen command total respect. . . with his words."<sup>210</sup> Under Bimbi's tutelage, Malcolm gained an intense hunger for reading. Around the same time, several of his siblings were writing him. His brother Philbert "who was forever joining something, wrote me this time that he had discovered the "natural religion for the black man. "<sup>211</sup>

As one would expect, Malcolm responded negatively. Reginald, one of his other brothers, wrote him as well, but this one was a little different. In Reginald's letter, he stated, "Malcolm, don't eat any more pork, and don't smoke any more cigarettes. I'll show you how to get out of prison."<sup>212</sup> Malcolm, eager to vacate prison, abruptly stopped eating pork and smoking. Reginald eventually visited Malcolm and explained to Malcolm the Nation of Islam, including that white people were the devil. Malcolm thought about the words his brother had spoken to him and the relationships that he had with white people. "He was astonished that for all of his street-wise experience, book learning, and support from friends and family that he had never had a relationship with a white person or social institution since early childhood that was nit fraught

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<sup>208</sup> Malcom X and Alex Haley, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. (New York: Ballantine Books, 1973), 110.

<sup>209</sup> X and Haley, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, 156.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*, 157.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*, 158.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*, 158.

with pain, deception, dishonesty, conflict, fear, injustice, greed, and hatred."<sup>213</sup> Malcolm became more receptive to the Nation of Islam. While in jail and working on his penmanship, Malcolm wrote Elijah Muhammad; Muhammad wrote back and advised him to renounce his past and bow in prayer, making a spiritual promise to never engage in the destructive behavior of his past life.<sup>214</sup> Praying was no easy feat for Malcolm. He said, "...but bending my knees to pray – that act- well, that took me a week.... I had to force myself to bend my knees."<sup>215</sup> From there, Malcolm continued to write letters to Elijah. Malcolm also began signing Malcolm X's in letters he would write in 1950. "Muhammad told Malcolm that a Nation of Islam member's last name was temporarily replaced with an X until such time as his original name was bestowed upon the new member."<sup>216</sup> Malcolm states, "For me, my "X" replaced the white slave master's name of "Little" which some blue-eyed devil named Little had imposed upon my paternal forebears."<sup>217</sup>

Malcolm X was released on parole in 1952 to his older brother Wilfred. Wilfred supplied Malcolm X with a job at the furniture he managed and a place to stay. Malcolm X visited Elijah Muhammad, and in June of 1953, Malcolm X was named assistant minister of Temple No. 1 in Detroit. Later, he would establish Boston's temple No. 11 and expand temple No. 12 in Philadelphia. Malcolm X led temple No. 7 in Harlem. While there, Malcolm X created an enormous surge of membership.

The ideologies that Malcolm X spread for the nation of Islam were that the white people were the devil, black people were the original people of the earth, and that the white race would fall. He also did not work with the civil rights movement. During this period, activists for the

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<sup>213</sup> Kofi Natambu, *The Life and Work of Malcolm X*. (Indianapolis, IN: Alpha, 2002), 135.

<sup>214</sup> Natambu, *The Life and Work of Malcolm X*, 139.

<sup>215</sup> X and Haley. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, 173.

<sup>216</sup> Natambu, *The Life and Work of Malcolm X*, 140.

<sup>217</sup> X and Haley, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, 203.

civil rights movement wanted the races tighter, the nation of Islam advocated for separation. Malcolm X was also highly critical of the civil rights movement was the "Farce on Washington."<sup>218</sup> Malcolm X ultimately rejected the strategy of nonviolence for the civil rights struggle.

Malcolm X continued to rise to prominence when he intervened during a confrontation in New York. Two policemen were breaking up a street altercation during this altercation when two Muslim brothers stood to watch the cops deal with the conflict. The cops told them to leave, but they did not. One of the cops attacked one of the brothers, later identified as Brother Hinton, and sent to a nearby precinct. The second brother called around, "And with some telephone calls, in less than half an hour, about fifty of Temple No.7's men of the Frit of Islam were standing in ranks-formation outside the police station."<sup>219</sup> As the minister, Malcolm entered the precinct and demanded to see the brother Hinton. "Other Negroes, curious, came running and gathered in excitement behind the Muslims."<sup>220</sup> Once Malcolm X saw brother Hinton, he demanded that Brother Hinton be taken to a hospital for immediate medical attention. Brother Hinton was immediately taken to the hospital as other Brothers followed behind. Once confident that brother Hinton was receiving medical attention, Malcolm X ordered the brothers to disperse, and the growing crowd of black people did as well. Malcolm X and the Nation of Islam were under strict surveillance from that point.

In 1958 Malcolm X married Betty Sanders, later Betty Shabazz, and had six daughters. His fame continued to grow to an international level from a host of newspaper appearances and

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<sup>218</sup> X and Haley, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, 287.

<sup>219</sup> *Ibid.*, 238.

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid.*

television appearances. The relationship between Malcolm X and Elijah began to fracture because of the amount of attention that Malcolm X was receiving over Elijah Muhammad. In 1961, during an unprovoked raid by Los Angeles police on a Nation of Islam Mosque, one member died and the other was paralyzed. Malcolm wanted revenge, but Elijah denied Malcolm X gathering Muslims to mobilize against the police force. In 1962, Malcolm X noticed that he appeared less and then not at all in Nation of Islam newspapers. "I learned that Mr. Muhammad's son Herbert, now the paper's publisher, had instructed that as little as possible be printed about me."<sup>221</sup> Within this time, allegations that Elijah Muhammad had extramarital affairs with Nation of Islam secretaries. Another moment that led to Malcolm X eventually leaving the Nation of Islam was his comment on Kennedy's assassination. Malcolm X stated, "the chickens coming home to roost... the hate in white men had not stopped with the killing of defenseless black people, but that hate, allowed to spread unchecked, finally had struck down this country's Chief of State... the same thing as had happened with Medgar Evers, with Patrice Lumumba, with Madame Nhu's husband."<sup>222</sup> After the comment, Elijah Muhammad prohibited Malcolm X from public speaking for 90 days.

In March of 1964, Malcolm X publicly announced his break with the Nation of Islam. Although Malcolm X was no longer with the Nation of Islam, he remained a Muslim. Malcolm X expressed that he wanted to work with civil rights leaders, but Elijah prevented him from doing so. Malcolm X also created two new organizations, the Muslim Mosque Inc. and the Organization of Afro-American Unity. Within the same year of leaving the Nation, Malcolm

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<sup>221</sup> X and Haley, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, 298.

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.*, 307.

committed himself to learning more about Islam and devoted himself to making the pilgrimage to Mecca.

The Hajj was another transformative experience for Malcolm X. During his travels, he shared what he thought and his beliefs with people from different cultures, and in return, he gained positive feedback. Malcolm X states, "know now that some white people are truly sincere that some truly are capable of being brotherly toward a black man."<sup>223</sup> Malcolm X saw all people "from blue-eyed blonds to black-skinned Africans"<sup>224</sup> interacting in the same Islamic ritual as equals. Malcolm also traveled to different places such as, France, the United Kingdom, and Africa. During his travels, Malcolm changed his name to el-Hajj Malik el-Shabazz, although he is known primarily as Malcolm X. In 1964, the relationship between Malcolm X and the Nation of Islam. When he returned to the states, Malcolm X received several death threats from the Nation of Islam. The iconic picture of Malcolm X defied these threats; *Ebony* magazine released a photo of him holding a rifle looking out of a window to depict his defiance.<sup>225</sup>

On February 2, 1965, Malcolm was headed to the Audubon Ballroom in Manhattan to address the Organization of African American Unity. Malcolm greeted the crowd, "Asalaikum brothers and sisters," and they responded with "Asalaikum salaam"<sup>226</sup> Shortly after the greeting, a disturbance broke out, and a few gunmen shot Malcolm X, one with a sawed-off shotgun and the others with revolvers. The gunmen shot Malcolm X in the chest with the shotgun, and the other gunmen also hit him. Malcolm was rushed to the hospital but was pronounced dead at 3:30 pm.

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<sup>223</sup> X and Haley, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, 369.

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*, 346.

<sup>225</sup> Hans J. Massaquoi, "The Mystery of Malcolm," *Ebony*, September 1964, 46.

<sup>226</sup> X and Haley, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, 442.

Malcolm X's life may have ended, but his legacy lived on through his philosophy. Historians primarily gain Malcolm X's philosophy through his speeches and autobiography. While in the Nation of Islam, Malcolm began all his speeches with "the honorable Elijah Muhammad teaches us," which makes it challenging to know which words are Malcolm's words and which are Elijah's. During his time with the Nation of Islam, Malcolm X taught that Black people were the original people, and that white people were the devil. He also taught the complete separation of black and white people while leaders of the Civil Rights movement wanted integration. Most of all, Malcolm X revoked the civil rights strategy of nonviolence. After Malcolm X left the Nation of Islam, he wanted to work with Civil Rights leaders but with some changes to their strategy. Malcolm believed that "Negroes have the right to fight against these racists, by any means that are necessary"<sup>227</sup> In one of his speeches, Malcolm X discussed changing Civil Rights struggle to a Human Rights struggle. He argues that calling it a Civil Rights struggle left it to the confines of the United States, whereas if the fight for black people were referred to based on a Human Rights struggle, it would allow for new allies and take the case and the country to the United Nations.<sup>228</sup> Malcolm X advocated for Black nationalism as well. "The political philosophy of black nationalism means that the black man should control the politics and the politicians in his own community; no more."<sup>229</sup> Malcolm X's beliefs in black nationalism also led him to discard the words used to describe black people like Negro and replacing them with black and Afro American to take back and own the words that described black people in America. Malcolm X's philosophies directly translate to the Black Power

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<sup>227</sup> X and Haley, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, 374.

<sup>228</sup> Malcolm X and George Breitman. *Malcolm X Speaks*, (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1990), 34.

<sup>229</sup> X and Breitman, *Malcolm X Speaks*, 38.

Movement in their strategies in the fight for liberation. His dreams and philosophies outlived him with a chant from a single black man in a crowd of other black people.

### **Stokely Carmichael and the Beginning of Black Power**

Thus, in 1966 after the shooting of James Meredith in Greenwood, Mississippi, Stokely Carmichael, a member of Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), stated, "This is the twenty-seventh time I have been arrested, and I ain't going to jail no more! The only way we gonna stop them, white men, from whuppin' us is to take over. What we gonna start sayin' now is Black Power!"<sup>230</sup> Stokely's use of the phrase Black Power was "a call for black people in this country to unite, to recognize their heritage, to build a sense of community .... To begin to define their own goals, to lead their own organizations."<sup>231</sup> Stokely believed that black people needed to gain an impression of what being a community would be in order to move forward. "Only when black people fully develop a sense of community, of themselves, can they begin to deal effectively with the problems of racism in this country."<sup>232</sup> Carmichael's notions fall in line with Black Nationalism. The strategy of building oneself up, being proud of who you will empower the community to successfully deal with racism.

Stokely was born in Trinidad and moved to the Bronx at a young age. Stokely attended high school at Bronx Science. They lived in a neighborhood where they were the only African family in a predominantly Irish and Italian neighborhood and a racially segregated high school. Stokely later attended college at Howard University. While at Howard University, Stokely was

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<sup>230</sup> Hasan Kwame Jeffries, *Bloody Lowndes Civil Rights and Black Power in Alabama's Black Belt*, (New York: New York University Press, 2009), 187.

<sup>231</sup> Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton, *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America*, (New York: Random House, 1967), 44.

<sup>232</sup> Carmichael and Hamilton, *Black Power*, 39.

steeped in political thought and civil rights. Stokely's life was filled with protests, arrests, and other issues which helped him grow as a political activist. Stokely worked in Memphis, Lowndes County, and Washington D.C. Stokely's involvement on campus with Nonviolent Action Group (NAG), his involvement with the freedom rides, his years with SNCC, and his field experience with the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) and Fannie Lou Hamer encouraged him to take a more radical approach. His field experience with these organizations led him to Black Power. Stokely also marched with Martin Luther King and was greatly affected by King. Stokely was also substantially shaped by Malcolm X. Stokely was also the chair of SNCC and briefly joined the Black Panther Party.

### **Black Panther Party**

During the 1960s, Civil Rights movement legislation was passed, but African Americans still faced economic hardships and social inequality. African Americans who stayed in urban areas lived in poverty, suffered from joblessness, health issues, and violence. The conditions they lived in led to turbulence in the 1960s, most notably was the riot in the Watts district of Los Angeles, the Watts riot, in 1965. The riot led to increased use of police force in urban areas. In this context, the Black Panther Party for Self Defense, later just the Black Panther Party, was founded in 1966 by two college students, Bobby Seale and Huey P Newton, in Oakland, California. In his early years, Newton was a preacher's son in public schools and a lover of poetry. During these years, two people had the most significant influence on him, Sonny Man, a man on the edges of society with money and status, and his brother Melvin, a professional in the making. Newton struggled between imitating the street-savvy Sonny and his professional brother throughout his life. He later studied to bring himself out of illiteracy by delving into the works of Plato and Descartes. The political organization they created aimed to protect and uplift the black

community. The Black Panther Party was one of the most prominent figures within the Black Power Era. The image they represented was, as Curtis Austin and Elbert Howard say, "awesome but handsome."<sup>233</sup> The Panthers wore black berets "slightly cocked to the side,"<sup>234</sup> a black leather jacket that "came to symbolize black power and armed self-defense"<sup>235</sup> with black pants, a powder blue shirt, and black boots. These members of the Black Panther Party invoked a ten-point program that listed their demands to America and their goals for the organization.

### **Strategy and Philosophy of the Black Panther Party**

The ten-point program states the following:

1. We Want Freedom. 2 We Want Full Employment for Our People. 3 We Want An End to the Robbery By the Capitalists of Our Black Community. 4. We Want Decent Housing Fit For The Shelter of Human Beings. 5. We Want Education for Our People That Exposes The True Nature Of This Decadent American Society. 6. We Want All Black Men To Be Exempt From Military Service. 7. We Want An Immediate End to Police Brutality and the Murder of Black People. 8. We Want Freedom For All Black Men Held In Federal, State, County, and City Prisons and Jails. 9. We Want All Black People When Brought To Trial To Be Tried In Court By A Jury Of Their Peer Group Or People From Their Black Communities, As Defined By the Constitution of the United States. 10. We Want Land, Bread, Housing, Education, Clothing, Justice, And Peace.<sup>236</sup>

Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale created this document in imitation of the Bill of Rights. The Black Panther Party made its intentions clear in making these demands. The Black

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<sup>233</sup> Curtis J Austin and Elbert "Big Man" Howard, *Up Against the Wall: Violence in the Making and Unmaking of the Black Panther Party*, (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2008), 65.

<sup>234</sup> Austin and Howard, *Up Against the Wall*. 65.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid.

<sup>236</sup> Huey P. Newton, *Revolutionary Suicide*, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973), 116-117.

Panther Party's strategy was to bring everything in the ten-point plan into fruition. The ten-point plan documented the needs of the community and the beliefs from which they came. They employed tactics such as feeding the children educating the community and "cop watching." Newton states that "... the seventh point -police-action – was the first program we emphasized"<sup>237</sup> so that they could educate the community on the party's existence. The Black Panther Party was most known for being armed and doing citizen patrols to watch police to ensure no forms of police brutality. The educated Newton knew that the California gun laws were loose, and they could open carry fully loaded weapons in the street to police the police. Newton states that "Out on patrol, we stopped whenever we saw the police questioning a brother or sister. We would walk over with our weapons and observe them from a safe distance so that the police could not say we were interfering with the performance of their duty."<sup>238</sup> He also goes on to state, "I always carried lawbooks in my car. "I would stand off a little and read the relevant portions of the penal code in a loud voice to all within hearing distance."<sup>239</sup> In retaliation, the California legislature looked to enact the Mulford Act which was a bill that conservative Republican Don Mulford brought to the table to take guns away from the organization. If the bill were to pass, it would end the Black Panther Party's actions of policing the police. On May 2, 1967, the Black Panther Party members marched on the capitol, guns in hand, to protest the bill. Bobby Seale and other members of the Black Panther Party ended up having an impromptu press conference, where he read the Black Panther's mandate No. 1, on the front lawn because they were not allowed to enter the assembly hall. The Black Panthers Party's actions propelled them into America's living room across the nation with the media coverage it received. "From all

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<sup>237</sup> Newton, *Revolutionary Suicide*, 120.

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid.*, 120.

<sup>239</sup> *Ibid.*, 120-121.

across the country, calls came to us about establishing chapters and branches; we could hardly keep track of the requests"<sup>240</sup> Unfortunately for the Black Panther Party, the Mulford Bill passed, and the Panthers immediately ended the cop patrols. Although the “cop patrols” did not survive long term this tactic was effective in building their reputation and membership. The Black Panther Party’s brazen militancy was often confused with hostility, but their primary goal in utilizing Oakland, California’s open carry law was to protect the community against police violence.

Another strategy that helped the Black Panther Party become popular was the organization’s programs that served their community. "There were several of these, ranging from liberation schools to free clinics, but the first and in many ways most important was the Free Breakfast for Children Program...."<sup>241</sup> The tactic they used to serve the community was the free breakfast program and later the free food program. These programs served the purpose of first and foremost feeding hungry children before school. "Its practical aim - to feed hungry children - was morally, if not politically, unobjectionable. Black, white, liberal, or conservative, few could speak out against the program's premise"<sup>242</sup> Mary Potorti also argued that the free breakfast program served three distinct functions.

First, it created an opportunity for the Panthers to interact with members of the community... in a context outside their infamous patrols ... Second, in the social spaces thus created, Party leaders could spread the underlying ideology of the group that tied revolutionary struggle to bread and butter issues of the daily survival ... Finally - and most controversially - Panther food programs demanded that area businesses get in line with the program or suffer the consequences.<sup>243</sup>

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<sup>240</sup> Newton, *Revolutionary Suicide*, 150-151.

<sup>241</sup>Kathleen Cleaver and George N. Katsiaficas, *Liberation, Imagination, and the Black Panther Party: A New Look at the Panthers and Their Legacy*, (New York: Routledge, 2001), 87.

<sup>242</sup> Mary Potorti, "'Feeding the Revolution': The Black Panther Party, Hunger, and Community Survival," *Journal of African American Studies* 21, (2017), 93.

<sup>243</sup> Potorti, "'Feeding the Revolution", 93-94

The free breakfast program allowed for the Panthers to solidify themselves in the community as the people fighting for the community. The Panthers faced external criticism for their food programs, specifically from the cops and the FBI.

FBI director at the time, J Edgar Hoover, categorized the Black Panther Party as "the greatest threat to the internal security of the country."<sup>244</sup> For Hoover to say this during the Vietnam war was paramount in meaning. The FBI created COINTELPRO in 1956 to target and disrupt communist groups and the Civil Rights movement. This section of the FBI grew to include the Black Panther Party in the 1960s. In 1967, the director of the FBI documents, "The purpose of this new counterintelligence endeavor is to expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit, or otherwise neutralize the activities of black nationalist, hate-type organizations and groupings, their leadership, spokesmen, membership, and supporters, and to counter their propensity for violence and civil disorder."<sup>245</sup> Police and the FBI believed that the Black Panther Party used community programs to indoctrinate children and discredit the police. "The BPP [Black Panther Party] is not engaged in the "Breakfast for Children" program for humanitarian reasons, including their efforts to create and image of civility, assume community control of Negroes, and to fill adolescents with their insidious poison."<sup>246</sup> The FBI wanted to stifle the community service programs. The FBI and cops worked together in an effort to show that the Party was an anti-cop. For example, through the use of a coloring book that showed "policemen as pigs and filled with pictures... showing black children stabbing and shooting and otherwise assaulting policemen."<sup>247</sup> The coloring book used as evidence was later thrown out because it was deemed "inappropriate

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<sup>244</sup> "Hoover Calls Panthers Top Threat to Security," *The Washington Post, Times Herald (1959-1973)*, Jul 16, 1969. 1.

<sup>245</sup> J. Edgar Hoover, COINTELPRO Black Extremist. 3.

<sup>246</sup> Cleaver and Katsiaficas, *Liberation, Imagination, and the Black Panther Party*, 87.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid.

for young people"<sup>248</sup> by the Black Panther Party. Therefore, it never entered production for young people. Ultimately, the FBI failed in stopping community service programs for the time being.

### **Eldridge Cleaver**

Aside from Bobby Seale and Huey Newton, other iconic members of the Black Panther Party played a significant role in the organization's history. Two other iconic members, Fred Hampton and Eldridge Cleaver, that pushed the Party. Eldridge Cleaver was the minister of information, essentially the spokesperson of the Black Panther Party. In *The Black Panthers Vanguard of the Revolution*, Clayborne Carson states, "Eldridge Cleaver was the person who made the party credible to black intellectuals to the white intellectuals"<sup>249</sup> After the assassination of Dr. King, Eldridge had the idea of directly attacking the police. So, he went to members of the Oakland branch and proposed the idea. Among the people to join him was Bobby Hutton, the youngest member of the Black Panther Party and the third member to join.

Eldridge Cleaver and other members of the Black Panther Party engaged with police. "On the night of April 6, 1968, Black Panthers riding in three cars ... were ambushed by the police."<sup>250</sup> The Black Panthers engaged in a shootout with the police. "Little Bobby Hutton and another Black Panther Party member, Eldridge Cleaver, were trapped by the police in the basement of a house on Twenty-Eighth Street in Oakland."<sup>251</sup> Cleaver and Hutton took cover in a basement where a canister exploded. Rather than burn to death, they [Hutton and Cleaver] decided to surrender. Bobby Hutton was the first to come out of the house to surrender. "... Little

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<sup>248</sup> Cleaver and Katsiaficas, *Liberation, Imagination, and the Black Panther Party*, 88.

<sup>249</sup> Stanley Nelson, *The Black Panthers: Vanguard of the Revolution*. 2 September 2015. Documentary.114:24.

<sup>250</sup> Newton, *Revolutionary Suicide*, 119.

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*, 119-120.

Bobby Hutton came out with his hands in the air. In cold blood, the police shot him dead in the street. He was seventeen years old."<sup>252</sup> Bobby Hutton was the first member of the Party to die. After the shootout with the police, they ordered Eldridge to turn himself in, but he did not and moved to Algeria. The United States could not touch Eldridge in Algeria. Eldridge and his wife established an international wing of the Black Panther Party in Algeria, aligned with North Korea, Chinese, and other African liberation movements. The unity that they achieved was through anti-American rhetoric. Countries around the world were demonizing America for the war in Vietnam. Eldridge and the international section of the Black Panther Party could rally allies to their side, as Malcolm X suggested when he discussed that African Americans change the black struggle to a human rights issue and take the case to the United Nations.

### **Fred Hampton**

A great orator came to be within the Party and was the next best leader of the Black Panther Party. Seale was in and out of jail, Newton was in jail, Eldridge was under self-exile in Algeria, the New York twenty-one were in prison with high bonds at \$100k, and David Hilliard, chief of staff of the Party, was under indictment. The only person left to lead was Fred Hampton who gained prominence in Chicago, Illinois, as the new leader because of his charisma and orator skills. "Fred Hampton, the rising Chicago leader of the panthers, possessed a charisma and effectiveness that won him the uncoveted award of being placed on the FBI's Rabble Rouser index...."<sup>253</sup> Hampton, armed with his skills and charisma, along with Bobby Rush, set out to unite Chicago. Rush stated that "... we developed a very, very close relationship with the Young Lords... we also developed a close relationship with the young patriots... we also worked closely

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<sup>252</sup> Newton, *Revolutionary Suicide*, 120.

<sup>253</sup> Austin and Howard, *Up Against the Wall*, 189.

with the SDS, and other organizations throughout the city of Chicago."<sup>254</sup> Rush and Hampton were working to form a united front to fight against oppression "and developed ... the rainbow coalition."<sup>255</sup> However, before the Rainbow Coalition could gain any momentum, Hampton was murdered.

On December 4, 1969, fourteen officers raided Hampton's apartment. Mark Clark answered the door, and the police shot him immediately. The police combed the house until they found a sleeping Hampton and killed him. "Fred Hampton was shot in the arm, shoulder, and twice through the head, and Mark Clark shot through the heart and lungs, were dead on arrival."<sup>256</sup> The FBI's COINTELPRO efforts to achieve their goal to "prevent the rise of a "messiah" was effective. COINTELPRO planted an informant William O Neal to obtain information on the Party for them. O'Neal states, "Well, I routinely supplied whatever floor plans or diagrams I could to the FBI."<sup>257</sup> O' Neal's information proved paramount to the FBI and killing Fred Hampton.

The Black Panther Party ended due to a culmination of things. COINTELPRO played a major part in dismantling the Panthers. The end of the Party came because of the split amongst the party members. Eldridge wanted to confront and topple the U.S. government, but the Black Panther Party in the states focused on Newton's survival programs. Eldridge and Newton had differing ideas on what the Party should do, causing the Party to split and become violent. Newton also became high on power and other substances after his release from prison, causing

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<sup>254</sup> Henry Hampton, Steve Fayer, and Sarah Flynn. *Voices of Freedom: An Oral History of the Civil Rights Movement from the 1950s through the 1980s*. (New York: Bantam Books, 1991), 528.

<sup>255</sup> Hampton, Fayer, Flynn, *Voices of Freedom*, 528.

<sup>256</sup> Hampton, Fayer, Flynn. *Voices of Freedom*, 535.

<sup>257</sup> *Ibid.*, 534.

him to abuse his power and members. This abuse led to party members leaving, causing the Party's end altogether in 1982.

### **Black Aesthetic and Art**

The Black Power Movement produced iconic images that would stay within the black community. One iconic image mentioned earlier in this essay was the pig and it stuck. Newton states that "first of all, words like "swine," "hog," "sow" and "pig" have always had unpleasant connotations."<sup>258</sup> The Black Panther's use of this word struck a nerve with the police. Newtons stated that "To call a policeman a pig conveys the idea of someone who is brutal, gross and uncaring."<sup>259</sup> Most people during this time knew exactly what pigs were like because they migrated from rural areas in the south where they were used to seeing farm animals. In calling an officer a pig, the community pressed upon the police the imagery of an animal that they viewed as disgusting.

The man behind the iconic pig and the artwork of the Black Panther Party was Emory Douglas who joined the Black Panther Party in 1967 until it dissolved in the 1980s. He states, "I was drawn to it because of its dedication to self-defense. The civil rights movement headed by Dr. King turned me off at that time, for those days nonviolent protest had no appeal to me."<sup>260</sup> Douglas created revolutionary artwork that portrayed African American oppression in the Black Panther newsletter as the minister of culture. Douglas states, "The images I turned in were just common folk images in that sense and the beauty within the essence of that. ... The culture and expression of Black folks: self-determination, the suffering, the pain, and the love. If you can

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<sup>258</sup> Newton, *Revolutionary Suicide*, 166.

<sup>259</sup> *Ibid.*, 166.

<sup>260</sup> Cleaver and Katsiaficas. *Liberation, Imagination, and the Black Panther Party*, 179-180.

capture that in your artwork, you've made the connection with the community and the broader community as well."<sup>261</sup> Douglas's work wanted to capture the Party's essence and everyday life in each piece. He also wanted to make it so everybody would understand the message in the text and the artwork of the newsletter. "Those unable to decipher the message by reading the text could easily identify with the sometimes complex images Douglas created."<sup>262</sup> Before working with the Black Panther Party, Douglas worked for Leroi Jones, better known as Amiri Baraka, the founder of the Black Arts Movement.

The Black Arts Movement was founded in 1965 when Baraka opened the Black Arts Repertory School in Harlem. Although the Movement started in New York, it did not last long. "BARTS itself lasted less than a year, dissolving in a maelstrom of internal personality conflicts, threats, and violence as well as external pressures."<sup>263</sup> The national impact came from cities like Detroit, Chicago, and California. Major works came from the journal of *Black Poetry* and *The Black Scholar* in California, and the *Third World* and *Negro Digest* later renamed *Black World* in Chicago. This movement grew alongside the Black Power movement. "Black art is the aesthetic and spiritual sister of the Black Power concept."<sup>264</sup> The Black Arts Movement inspired many, but the movement was short-lived, leaving a legacy that is still felt. The Black Arts Movement produced notable individuals like Maya Angelou, Larry Neal, Audre Lorde, Sun Ra, and laid the groundwork for hip hop music. "Imamu Amiri Baraka's path to black consciousness was different from that of Malcolm X; it represents the other important route to black nationalism, the

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<sup>261</sup> Emory Douglas and Jarrell Phillips. "Where Revolution Abounds." *Race, Poverty & the Environment* 21, no. 2 (2017), 50.

<sup>262</sup> Mary Duncan, "Emory Douglas and the Art of the Black Panther Party." *Spectrum: A Journal on Black Men* 5, no. 1 (2016), 125.

<sup>263</sup> James Edward Smethurst, *The Black Arts Movement: Literary Nationalism in the 1960s and 1970s*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 101.

<sup>264</sup> Larry Neal, "The Black Arts Movement," *The Drama Review: TDR* 12, no. 4 (1968), 29.

road traveled by students and revolutionary intellectuals."<sup>265</sup> This Movement went against Western culture and strived to create its way to present the black experience issuing in what is known as the Black aesthetic. Larry Neal writes, "The motive behind the Black aesthetic is the destruction of the white thing, the destruction of white ideas, and white ways of looking at the world."<sup>266</sup> These revolutionary artists and intellectuals looked to break down the hegemony of the white oppressor and create their own. "It proposes a separate symbolism, mythology, critique, and iconology."<sup>267</sup> Symbols and icons from Black Power and Black Arts era carried on the legacy. The clenched fist is one symbol that connects these past movements to the present Black Lives Matter Movement. The clenched fist has always held the spirit of revolution but became a staple in the Black community during the 1968 Summer Olympic Games in Mexico City. Athletes Tommy Smith and John Carlos won first and second place respectively during the games, and while on the podium, they raised a clenched fist as a form of protest the oppression in America. The Black Panthers then adopted this as the black power fist, and to this day, the symbol lives on in Black Lives Matter protests.

### **Black Lives Matter and Black Power Comparison**

The Black Power Movement and the Black Lives Matter movement share similarities in mentality. For example, one significant similarity between the two is that they are not anti-white. Bobby Seale states in a speech, "we don't hate nobody because of their color. We hate oppression; we hate murder of black people in our community...." Similarly, the counterpoint that counter protests vehemently used with Black Lives Matter is All Lives Matter. All lives do

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<sup>265</sup> Komozi Woodard, *A Nation Within a Nation: Amiri Baraka (LeRoi Jones) and Black Power Politics*, (Chapel Hill, N.C.: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 50.

<sup>266</sup> Neal, "The Black Arts Movement", 30.

<sup>267</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

matter, but the lives of Black are taken with no repercussions to the offender and Black lives are the ones that are continuously marginalized and oppressed. For all lives to matter, Black lives must matter as well. Some White people in both generations believed that Black people look to take over and become the dominant force. Stokely states that "the ultimate values and goals are not domination or exploitation of other groups, but rather an effective share in the total power of the society."<sup>268</sup> Meaning Black people do not want to take over society but play an equal part in society without oppression and marginalization.

Both organizations want to work with different organizations. As shown earlier, Fred Hampton and Bobby Rush looked to form a united front in Chicago with the Rainbow Coalition. "The BPP worked with the Brown Berets..., the Young Lords, ... as well as the Red Guard."<sup>269</sup> Black Lives Matter activists also look to ally themselves with other organizations. As Patrisse Cullors states in a Ted Talk interview, "It [ Black Lives Matter] is a tool for our allies to show up differently."<sup>270</sup> The two organizations' mentality meets strategy in practice in terms of self-defense. Both activist groups share Malcolm X's mindset in terms of any means necessary in common. The Black Panther Party displays this mindset in their patrolling of the police. Some Black Lives Matter activists employ the same tactic, but instead activists video record the police and post it on social media for the world to see. Both the Black Panther Party and Black Lives Matter invoke a plan of action. The Black Panther Party uses the ten-point plan, and Black Lives Matter uses thirteen guiding principles. Each organization also uses the media to gain attention to its cause. The Black Panther's use of loaded guns was a tactic to get the attention of the community and the media to get their point across.

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<sup>268</sup> Carmichael and Hamilton, *Black Power*, 47.

<sup>269</sup> Charles E. Jones, *The Black Panther Party (reconsidered)*, (Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1998), 32.

<sup>270</sup> Bobby Seale, "Bobby Seale Speech," *KPIX Eyewitness News*, November 2019, 1:57.

An example of this would be patrolling the police and the march on the capital. In Newton's work *Revolutionary Suicide*, he describes the scene of the party members on the steps of the capitol in Sacramento, stating, "the message [mandate 1] was definitely going out...the press and the people assembled were so amazed at the Black Panther's presence, and particularly the weapons... they were concentrating on the weapons"<sup>271</sup> Black Lives Matter activists use social media to get their point out and raw footage from protests or occurrences of oppression. For example, "The most significant #BlackLivesMatter activity prior to May 2020 occurred June 14-16, 2019, when the daily tweet count reached over 30,000, and February 5-8, 2020, when it reached over 40,000. Both of those spikes came in reaction to events important to the social Movement for racial justice."<sup>272</sup> With social media activism, Black Lives Matter activists can reach many people in a short period.

The Black Power Movement emerged after the death of Malcolm X in the late 1960s. Black people were left in space thinking what Malcolm would do now. The decedents of Malcolm X, the Black Panther Party, and Stokely Carmichael took on the ideology of Malcolm X and expanded on them. Malcolm X believed that if the U.S. government would not protect them, the black community should do so themselves. The Black Panther Party did just that by patrolling the police to ensure they did not harass African Americans in the community. In addition, Malcolm X advocated for black nationalism and racial pride. After galvanizing the Movement for Black Power, Stokely expanded on that idea in his interviews and speeches.

## **Conclusion**

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<sup>271</sup> Newton, *Revolutionary Suicide*, 149.

<sup>272</sup> Jamillah Bowman Williams, Naomi Mezey & Lisa Singh, *#BlackLivesMatter—Getting from Contemporary Social Movements to Structural Change*, 12 Calif. L. Rev. Online 1 (June 2021).

The era of Black Power was revolutionary and looked to achieve racial pride and economic freedom, leading to self-sufficiency and safety from racial prejudice. The activists demanded change to improve black communities in the United States and used any path they could to get that change. The Black Power Movement then effectively ended in the early 80s after the FBI employed COINTELPRO to misdirect and disrupt the efforts of the Movement. The Black Panther party left a legacy of "the saliency of armed resistance, a tradition of community service, a commitment to the self-determination of all people and a model of political action for oppressed people."<sup>273</sup> The Black Arts Movement grew alongside the Black Power Movement, demanding change from a cultural perspective.

Revolutionary artists in the Black Arts movement looked to create their own culture, which in turn breathed life into the black aesthetic. The black aesthetic took the media by storm; the look of the Black Panther Party, the afros, and the art that came from this era all helped display the black experience in America. Black Power and Black Lives Matter activists are following in the legacy of their most recent predecessor. Current activists share the same emphasis on racial pride, art, self-sufficiency, and the goal of being black without life-threatening repercussions. Both organizations employ the tactic of patrolling the police, although the Black Panther Party took a more active approach. Both sets of activists set forth a plan, demanding what they want to be better their communities. The difference lies in leadership. Black Lives Matter has a decentralized system, whereas Black Power activists have clear leadership roles. Black Lives Matter activists employ both nonviolent and disruptive forms of protest. They take from both Martin Luther King with peaceful marches and the mentality of

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<sup>273</sup> Jones, *The Black Panther Party (reconsidered)*, 27.

Malcolm X and the Black Power activists in terms of demanding what they want and getting it by any means necessary.

## Conclusion

African and African Americans in the United States have been fighting for human rights for over 400 years, since the beginning of slavery. From the early 1600s to now African Americans have been a part of and created social movements for their human rights. The #BlackLivesMatter movement is the most recent outgrowth in the battle for human rights. This movement highlights the ongoing oppression of African Americans in the twenty-first century. The #BlackLivesMatter movement began in 2013 as a response to the acquittal of George Zimmerman and has cascaded in growth from that point on with the death of others such as Eric Garner, Mike Brown, Ahmaud Aubrey and George Floyd. The Black community is outraged by these events, triggering this new movement for black lives created by Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors and Opal Tometi, but the names of black people that have been wronged by the police continues to grow.

The abolitionist movement laid the groundwork for every other movement after, including the Black Lives Matter movement. The abolitionists and Black Lives Matter Activists have similar strategies and tactics. The abolitionists had an indirect approach and a direct approach to fighting for the rights of people. Those who fought for the end of slavery understood that they had to take an honest and emotional approach to bring people to their cause. Black Lives Matter activists, on the other hand are aggressively direct action. Their use of indirect action is mainly through social media to spread awareness and organize protests. Comparatively, the abolition movement and the Black Lives Matter movement include people from different backgrounds looking to change America. Both groups also share a commonality in the way they spread information. There were pamphlets, books, and orators for the abolitionists, and Black

Lives Matter Activists have social media. Fundamentally, the two organizations have the same concept, spread knowledge, but the medium in which information and misdeeds are spread has changed. The abolitionists and Black Lives Matter activists also differ in their organizational structure. The abolitionists had clear leaders, a defined structure, and several committees, whereas the Black Lives Matter organization takes a decentralized approach.

After the Civil War in 1865 America saw the rise of groups tailored to improving the lives of African Americans. The steps taken in the late 1800s paved the way for the interracial organizations that came to be during the early 1900s. Early 1900s organizations included the NAACP, the National Urban League, and the UNIA. These organizations helped propel African American lives. The early 1900s were also a time where African Americans were creating new philosophies for themselves which leads to the Harlem Renaissance. It was a revival of African American culture in the arts as well as politics. During the great migration and the creation of the Harlem renaissance, new forms of black music came to be, such as blues and jazz. There were also black theaters for this new music to be played, contemporary plays, and other art forms. Many leaders during that time were outspoken, as mentioned in this work, like Marcus Garvey and DuBois, and provided a change in black people across the globe. This new sense of self-determination and pride provided a new commitment to political activism and social change that would continue.

In Comparison, the strategies and tactics used by the NAACP, UNIA, artists in the Harlem renaissance, and National Urban League are similar to the techniques used by Black Lives Matter activists. For example, the methods that artists used to debunk racial stereotypes and

express themselves in the environment are the same as Black Lives Matter activists' use of songs, movies, and photography to spread awareness and expose their environments. The NAACP primarily focuses on taking legal action to help the black community free from oppression. Black Lives Matter activists are similar to the NAACP in this way with their defund the police initiative. The significant difference between this activist and the Black Lives Matter activist is that Black Lives Matter activists have a decentralized structure. Whereas the early 20th-century activists had a centralized system.

The Civil Rights movement was a decade-long fight for all minorities, specifically African Americans, to gain the United States' equality. Organizations such as SCLC, SNCC CORE, and the NAACP on the front lines of the movement used nonviolent direct action and civil disobedience to show the mistreatment that African Americans faced. The organization within the civil rights movement is very similar to the current Black Lives Matter movement. They both operate under an umbrella structure and work with any other organization that share the same principles, but the civil rights movement does have clear leaders. BLM activists also use demonstrations such as marches and sit-ins to create a crisis that will ultimately open the door for discussions. Activists in both the Civil Rights and Black Lives Matter movement use the media on a master class level to broadcast their message. Although BLM activists spread their message via social media platforms and Civil Rights activists use televisions. During the 60s, the black church served as the cornerstone for the black movement, but it does not play a pivotal role in Black Lives Matter Movement.

One strategy that played a significant role in the Civil Rights era was to educate the black communities and get them to vote. This strategy also plays a role in the current movement and was especially visible in the latest 2020 election. There were some groups that began to see

things differently. Towards the mid-1960s, groups such as SNCC and CORE began to lean more towards the Black Power moniker that Stokely Carmichael brought to national attention. These groups began to reject the nonviolent teachings of Martin and subscribe to the philosophy of Malcolm X.

After the death of Malcolm X in the late 1960's black people were left in place imagining what Malcolm would do now this in turn lead to the creation of the Black Power. The decedents of Malcolm X, the Black Panther Party, and Stokely Carmichael took on the ideology of Malcolm X and expanded on them. Stokely galvanized the movement by calling for Black Power during the march against fear in Mississippi. He expanded on Malcolm X's ideas of racial pride and black nationalism in his interviews and speeches. The Black Panther Party looked to shield the black community from police brutality and harassment by patrolling the police. The Black Panther Party also enacted the ten-point plane, a list of demands that they wanted from the U.S government that would lead to self-determination and financial freedom. Also, during this time, the Black Arts movement grew alongside the Black Power Movement, demanding change from a cultural perspective. Revolutionary artists within this movement looked to create their own culture, which in turn breathed life into the black aesthetic. The black aesthetic took the media by storm; the look of the black panther party, the afros, and the art that came from this era all helped display the black experience in America.

Black Power and Black Lives Matter activists share the same emphasis on racial pride and the goal of being black without lethal ramifications. Both organizations employ the tactic of patrolling the police, although the Black Panther Party took a more active approach in patrolling the police and Black Lives Matter Activists record police. Both sets of activists set forth a plan, demanding what they want to be better than communities. The difference lies in leadership.

Black Lives Matter has a decentralized system, whereas Black Power activists have clear leadership roles. Black Lives Matter activists employ both nonviolent and disruptive forms of protest. They take from both Civil Rights leader Martin Luther King with peaceful marches and the mentality of the Black Power Godfather, Malcolm X and his descendants in terms of demanding what they want and getting it by any means necessary.

The lasting legacies of past movements has left a sustained influence on the present generation setting in stone that the Black Lives Matter Movement is theoretically in line with previous civil rights movements. Black Lives Matter activists use some of the same strategies and tactics of the past to press on in the fight for equality in present day America. The use of the media to portray a message is present in all movements although differently in each one. The evolution of black nationalism is also present in each movement. David, Walkers *The Appeal*, is the first acknowledgment of black nationalism, Marcus Garvey also continued that trend in the 1920s, to Malcom X and the Black Panther Party in the 1950s and 60s and to now with Black Lives Matter Activists. Each movement throughout the centuries used some form of indirect and direct action to disrupt the status quo in favor of African and African Americans, rather activists worked to persuade America through peaceful means such as political maneuver or marches or take a more direct approach with boycotts and standing for the rights of African Americans. Each group of activists worked to end the mistreatment of African Americans.

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